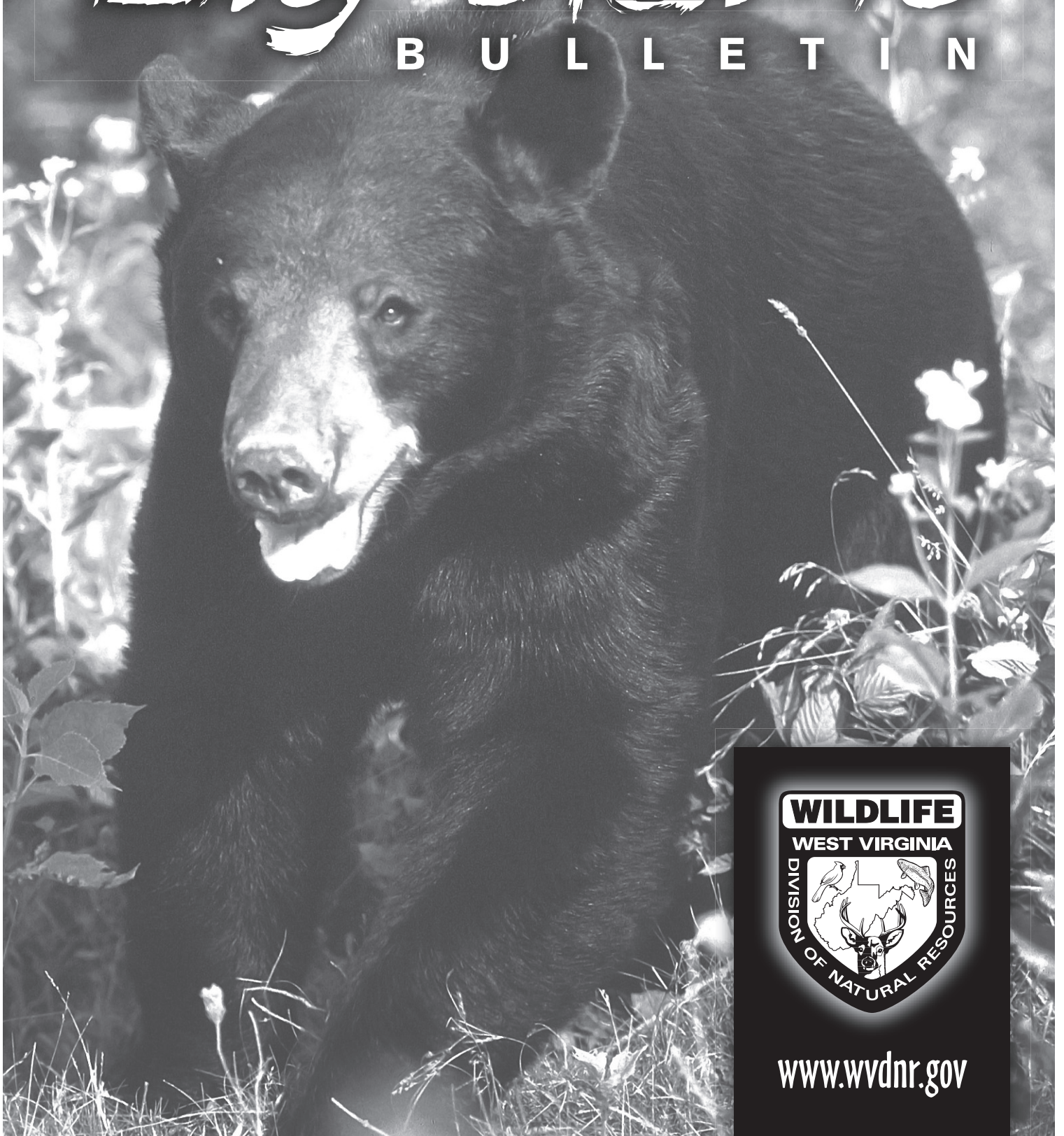


WV Division of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Section

2006

Big Game

BULLETIN



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WILDLIFE RESOURCES SECTION BULLETIN 07-1

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STATEMENT OF POLICY REGARDING THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO USE FACILITIES AND PARTICIPATE IN PROGRAMS

It is the policy of the Division of Natural Resources to provide its facilities, services, programs and employment opportunities to all persons without regard to sex, race, age, religion, national origin or ancestry, disability or other protected status.

BLACK BEAR

by
Christopher W. Ryan

Season Results and Highlights

West Virginia hunters harvested 1,704 black bears during the combined archery and firearms seasons (Tables 1 and 2). This represents the second highest total on record and a 2% increase over 2005 (Figure 1). Hunters harvested bears in every county in Districts 2, 3, and 4. West Virginia's total black bear harvest was very close to what biologists predicted before the season. Near ideal weather conditions and a good hard mast crop made bears available for gun hunters in December. In addition, this year's harvest combined with nonseasonal mortalities set the second highest record of 1,819 known bear deaths in the Mountain State. The record is 1,904 mortalities recorded in 2003 (Table 3).

Gun hunters harvested an all time record (1,188) bears in 2006. This was the first time that gun hunters harvested more than 1,100 bears. Firearms hunters harvested 233 bears, a 13% increase, during the special seasons held in Boone, Fayette, Kanawha, and Raleigh counties. There were 149 (77M: 72F) and 84 (57M: 27F) bears harvested during the early November season with dogs and during the late November season without dogs, respectively (Table 1).

December firearms hunters harvested 955 (670M: 285F) bears, a 12% increase over 2005 (Table 1). Good hard mast conditions, near ideal weather conditions, and an abundant bear population led to the large increase in the gun harvest. Acorns are the most important fall food for black bears throughout the Appalachians and may greatly affect the denning ecology of West Virginia's black bears. Black, red, and scarlet oak production was down slightly from 2005 but still produced good mast crops. Beech and white oaks were noticeably above the 36-year average while the hickory crop remained steady. Due to the prolonged activity because of favorable mast conditions and good weather, more bears were available for harvest in December. The top five traditional December counties were Greenbrier (148), Pocahontas (132), Randolph (122), Pendleton (101), and Webster (91).

Bowhunters harvested 516 bears (322M: 194F), 12% lower than 2005 but was still the fourth highest on record. Archery hunters were able to take advantage of the abundant bear population but good mast conditions resulted in a lower harvest. West Virginia biologists have demonstrated the relationship between mast conditions and archery bear harvests. Typically during years of more abundant mast conditions the archery harvest will be lower and during years of mast failure archery harvests will be higher. Archery hunters continue to harvest bears in many of our non-traditional bear counties of the extreme eastern panhandle, southern, and western counties. The top five archery counties were Preston (66), Randolph (60), Webster (37), Hardy (33), and Nicholas (32).

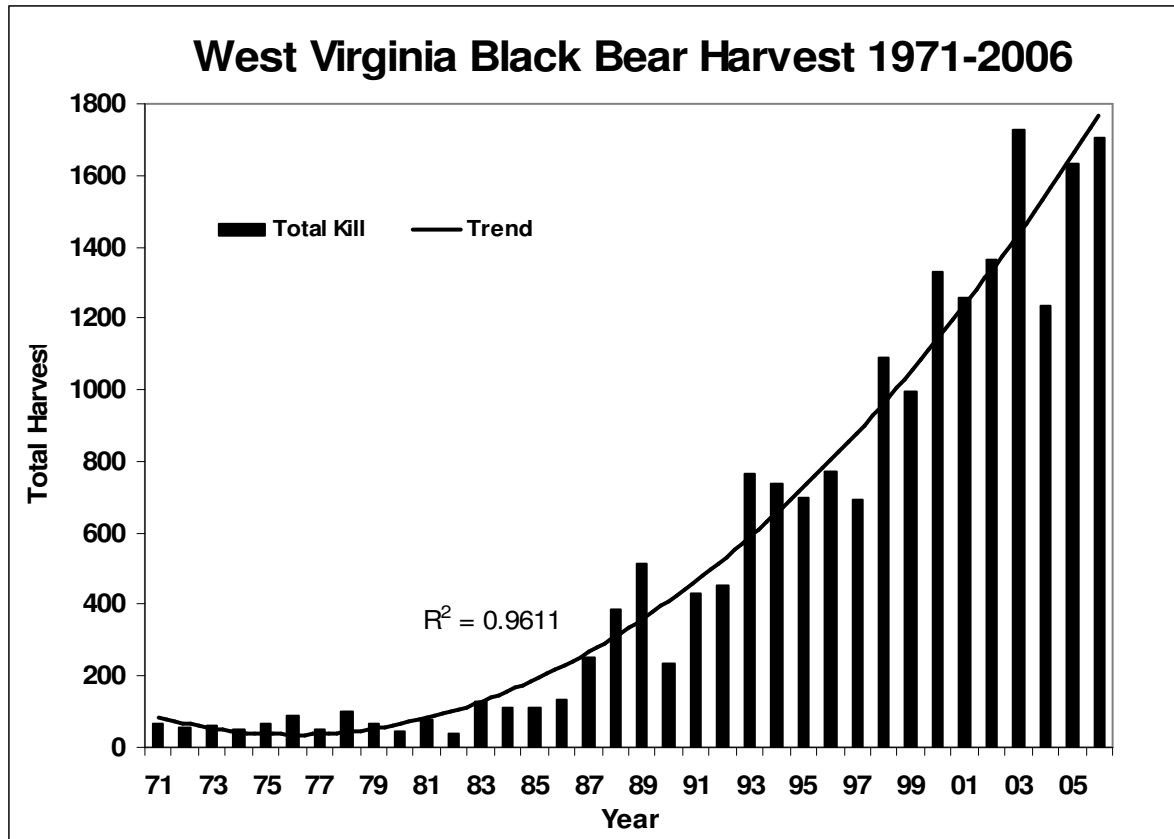


Figure 1. West Virginia Black Bear Harvest, 1971 - 2006.

Nonseasonal Mortalities

There were 115 bears killed on highways, died as a result of illegal or marauder activities, or succumbed from other nonhunting causes (electrocution, accidental poisoning, etc.). This is up slightly from the 105 nonseasonal mortalities recorded in 2005 (Table 4). There were 61 deaths from vehicular collisions compared to 62 roadkills in 2005. The number of illegal kills was down from 15 in 2005 to 8 in 2006; however, the number of bears killed from nuisance behavior was up to 36 in 2006 compared to 18 in 2005. There were 10 miscellaneous deaths in 2006.

Damage Payments

All hunters who pursue bears are required to buy bear damage stamps (Class DS). Funds derived from stamp sales are deposited in a special bear damage account to reimburse property owners for real and personal property damage caused by bears.

The number of bear damage claims was down 28% from 201 in 2005 to 145 in 2006 (Table 5). Total payments of \$98,089 were 11% lower than the \$109,147 paid out in 2005. Claims were reported in 28 counties in 2005 and 30 counties in 2006.

There were 47 claims for bees (compared to 58 in 2005), 17 for livestock (49 in 2005), 29 for corn (41 in 2005), and 52 (53 in 2005) miscellaneous claims (tents, coolers, automobiles, storm doors, windows, dogs, all terrain vehicle seats, storage buildings, etc.).

Greenbrier County had the greatest dollar amount in compensations at \$19,468 and Randolph County was second with \$15,324. The six counties with the most claims were Randolph (23), Preston (13), Greenbrier (12), Pocahontas (11), Nicholas (11), and Tucker (11).

Teeth Collections

Teeth from the 2005 samples have been received and hunters have been notified of their bear's age. Hunters submitted 845 useable teeth (correct tooth, identification matched check tags, etc.) for age consideration. One percent (8 M: 1F) were cubs (cubs are legal if they weigh 100 pounds), 32% (199M: 73F) were yearlings, 27% (150M: 80F: 1U) were 2-year olds, 12% (68M: 33F) were 3-year olds, and the remaining 28% (98M: 134F) were 4-years old or older. The oldest reported bear was a 21-year old female in Greenbrier County harvested on 10/18/05.

Reproductive Tract Collections

Black bears have one of the lowest reproductive rates of any land mammal in North America. Population dynamics research projects have shown that litter size, adult female survival, and interbirth interval are the three key factors that influence black bear populations. Managers adjust harvest regulations to manipulate adult female survival; however, they are unable to control reproductive rates (litter size, interbirth interval, cub survival, etc.). To help monitor these reproductive rates wildlife managers and biologists have been collecting female reproductive tracts to estimate litter size in respective areas. Managers hope to analyze these data in fall 2007 to compare the most appropriate, statistically sound, and cost efficient way to monitor reproductive rates. By looking at these data over a number of years we hope to report these important results to you next year.

Black Bear Monitoring and Research Study

The black bear monitoring and research project was initiated in 1999 to gather demographic information from bears in Boone, Fayette, Kanawha, and Raleigh counties and to learn more about bears captured as a result of nuisance behavior. Bear seasons have been and will continue to be modified based primarily on data collected through this study. A northern study area primarily centered in Randolph and Tucker counties was added in 2004 to reexamine demographic parameters of the bear population from data previously collected in the 1970s and 1980s. One of the primary goals of this project is to identify the best cost effective way for the DNR to effectively manage the bear population. Wildlife managers did an incredible job in both study areas of trapping bears in 2006.

Wildlife managers have handled 579 adult bears 1,118 times on the southern study area since 1999. Bears handled during nuisance complaints were given orange ear tags so that they could be easily identified; whereas, bears caught specifically on research trap lines for the purpose of marking additional bears were tagged with black ear tags. Wildlife managers handled 31 newborn cubs (18M; 10F; 3U) in 11 litters ($\bar{x} = 2.8$) during 2006. DNR personnel observed 235 (103M: 105F: 27U) cubs during winter den checks during the study period. Mean total litter size was 2.81 cubs (range 1-5, $n = 83$). There were 5 litters of 1 cub, 22 litters of 2 cubs, 40 litters of 3 cubs, 14 litters of 4 cubs, and 2 litters of 5 cubs. Ninety-two of 95 (97%) available females produced cubs. Sample sizes differed because managers heard cubs at some dens but did not get a reliable cub count. Wildlife managers also observed 22 yearlings with 9 sows ($\bar{x} = 2.4$) during 2006 winter den checks. However, these data must be looked at with extreme caution because it is very difficult for managers to get accurate counts on the number of yearlings present due to the fact that the bears on the southern study are less likely to den. Therefore, these should be considered minimum yearling counts.

In the southern study area, 129 (59M: 70 F) bears were tagged in 2006 or were still wearing their radio transmitters from previous years. One hundred six (40M: 66F) of the 129 bears were in the 4-county study area and considered available for harvest. Most of the additional bears outside of the study area were trapped and relocated as part of normal DNR activities. Age data was not available at press time; however, it is estimated that there were 6 yearlings and 60 2+ year-olds in the female sample within the study area. Thirty-eight females were equipped with working radio transmitters at the start of the 2006 hunting season.

Six of 66 (9%) females and 4 of 40 males (10%) available for direct harvest in the southern study area were reported dead during the 2006 hunting season. Two (2M: 0F) bears were harvested during the bow season, 7 (2M: 5F) during the early November season, and 1 (0M: 1F) during the buck gun season.

There were 26 known deaths of tagged bears during the 2006 hunting season in the southern study area. These known deaths were a combination of bears tagged during the entire study period that have not been previously reported. Sixteen (9M: 7F) bears were harvested during the early November dog season, 5 (4M: 1F) during the bow season, 1 female during the buck gun season, 1 male during the December season, 1 male was killed illegally, and 2 (1M: 1F) were harvested but the hunter did not state specifically what season.

Wildlife managers in Districts 1 and 3 marked 85 (39M: 46F) bears during 2006 to gather demographic data on the bear population in our traditional counties. Seventy-six bears (32M: 44F) were available for harvest inside the study area. Thirty-four female bears were equipped with radio transmitters at the start of hunting season. Two (5%) females and 14 (44%) males available for direct harvest died after October 1. Four (4M: 0F) were harvested by archery hunters, 11 (10M: 1F) were harvested in December, and 1 female died from a vehicle collision. In addition to the 16 known deaths from bears handled in 2006, 4 (3M: 1F) bears handled before 2006 died during archery season and 4 (3M: 1 F) bears handled before 2006 were harvested during the December firearms season.

On the northern study area wildlife managers worked 9 dens with 23 (10M: 13F) newborn cubs ($\bar{x} = 2.5$) during 2006. The two year average litter size was 2.4 for both 2005 and 2006 combined. Wildlife managers also worked 2 dens where the bear was too young and 1 den when the sow was too old to have cubs. Managers worked 11 dens with 23 yearlings present ($\bar{x} = 2.09$) and one sow that was by herself that might have experienced total litter loss. One additional sow was not accessible to researchers due to her den structure.

In addition to the population monitoring and research project, the DNR has cooperated in a project at Virginia Tech to evaluate the accuracy and effectiveness of reconstructing black bear and white-tailed deer populations from age data. Currently the project is in its final stages and manuscripts have been submitted for publications. In summary, the project demonstrated that Downing age reconstruction is a very effective method of estimating bear populations if a random or complete sample is taken from the harvested population.

The West Virginia Black Bear Monitoring and Research Project graciously accepted 5 donations from private groups during 2006. The West Virginia Outdoor Sportsman, the West Virginia Trophy Hunters Association, and 3 anonymous donations by the same person have all provided funds to help us buy additional radio transmitters. Their support of our natural resources and projects help to demonstrate the cooperation between the WVDNR and multiple groups. We thank them for their continued support.

Table 1. West Virginia 2006 black bear harvest by season and county.

County	Bow	Early Nov.	Late Nov.	Dec.	Total
Barbour	24	0	0	1	25
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	2	0	0	0	2
Marion	0	0	0	0	0
Marshall	0	0	0	0	0
Monongalia	3	0	0	0	3
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0
Preston	66	0	0	34	100
Taylor	1	0	0	0	1
Tucker	27	0	0	43	70
Wetzel	0	0	0	0	0
Dist. I Subtotal	123	0	0	78	201
Berkeley	1	0	0	0	1
Grant	14	0	0	36	50
Hampshire	4	0	0	4	8
Hardy	33	0	0	46	79
Jefferson	2	0	0	0	2
Mineral	9	0	0	14	23
Morgan	2	0	0	1	3
Pendleton	20	0	0	101	121
Dist. II Subtotal	85	0	0	202	287
Braxton	4	0	0	12	16
Clay	6	0	0	4	10
Lewis	0	0	0	2	2
Nicholas	32	0	0	78	110
Pocahontas	19	0	0	132	151
Randolph	60	0	0	122	182
Upshur	5	0	0	2	7
Webster	37	0	0	91	128
Dist. III Subtotal	163	0	0	443	606
Fayette	24	26	21	21	92
Greenbrier	31	0	0	148	179
McDowell	14	0	0	6	20
Mercer	5	0	0	2	7
Monroe	10	0	0	16	26
Raleigh	9	34	18	7	68
Summers	1	0	0	1	2
Wyoming	10	0	0	4	14
Dist. IV Subtotal	104	60	39	205	408
Boone	10	40	20	8	78
Cabell	0	0	0	0	0
Kanawha	17	49	25	15	106
Lincoln	2	0	0	1	3
Logan	7	0	0	3	10
Mason	0	0	0	0	0
Mingo	4	0	0	0	4
Putnam	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	0	0	0	0	0
Dist. V Subtotal	40	89	45	27	201
Calhoun	0	0	0	0	0
Doddridge	0	0	0	0	0
Gilmer	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0
Pleasants	0	0	0	0	0
Ritchie	1	0	0	0	1
Roane	0	0	0	0	0
Tyler	0	0	0	0	0
Wirt	0	0	0	0	0
Wood	0	0	0	0	0
Dist. VI Subtotal	1	0	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
State Total	516	149	84	955	1,704

Table 2. Sex ratios of West Virginia black bears for November gun season, bow season, and December gun season, 1964-2006.

Year	Bow season and/or Early Nov. gun season		Late Nov. or December gun season		Annual Kill		Total*
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
1964-1978							
15-Yr Total	318	345	178	71	496	416	912
Sex Ratios	48%	52%	71%	29%	54%	46%	
1979	0	0	50	18	50	18	68
1980	2	2	34	9	36	11	47
1981	3	2	59	16	62	18	80
1982	11	5	16	4	27	9	36
1983	11	6	78	34	89	40	129
1984	8	8	51	43	59	51	110
1985	14	7	68	24	82	31	113
1986	31	14	61	26	92	40	132
1987	40	14	146	51	186	65	251
1988	21	16	198	165	219	181	400
1989	81	96	198	135	279	231	510
1990	41	20	114	60	155	80	235
1991	72	57	186	111	258	168	426
1992	112	89	169	85	281	174	455
1993	141	96	340	190	481	286	767
1994	111	73	290	258	401	331	732
1995	152	75	310	153	462	228	690
1996	114	101	355	198	469	299	768
1997	225	198	178	85	403	283	686
1998	167	97	481	337	648	434	1,082
1999	256	168	369	201	625	369	994
2000	196	102	655	364	851	466	1,317
2001	302	165	482	301	784	466	1,250
2002	540	321	327	169	867	490	1,357
2003	605	422	450	222	1,055	644	1,699
2004	319	219	479	218	798	437	1,235
2005	432	285	616	301	1048	586	1,634
2006	399	266	727	312	1,126	578	1,704
28-Year Total	4,406	2,924	7,487	4,090	11,893	7,014	18,907
Average Sex Ratios	60%	40%	64%	36%	63%	37%	
2006 Sex Ratios	60%	40%	70%	30%	66%	34%	

*Represents bears of known sex and not the total harvest in each year.

Table 3. Number of black bears killed each year in West Virginia and cause of death.

Year	Hunting Season		Illegal Kill	Road Kill	Marauders	Others	Total
	Bow	Gun					
70's Subtotal	14	523	70's Average Annual Bag: Bow 2; Gun 65				
1980	4	43	9	5	11	3	75
1981	5	75	15	2	5	0	102
1982	17	20	17	8	17	5	84
1983	17	112	15	6	7	7	164
1984	16	94	14	7	9	7	147
1985	22	92	12	9	11	13	159
1986	44	88	8	18	18	3	179
1987	55	197	12	10	15	13	302
1988	38	350	20	25	23	24	480
1989	43	471	14	14	15	15	572
80's Subtotal	261	1,542	80's Average Annual Bag: Bow 26; Gun 154				
1990	61	174	14	23	13	10	295
1991	131	297	18	21	13	2	482
1992	201	254	17	48	18	8	546
1993	239	529	24	40	4	6	842
1994	185	550	10	31	5	5	786
1995	227	470	14	37	6	8	762
1996	214	558	6	23	15	7	823
1997	420	272	13	58	30	10	803
1998	265	825	12	30	8	6	1,146
1999	420	577	9	24	8	15	1,053
90's Subtotal	2,363	4,506	90's Average Annual Bag: Bow 236; Gun 450				
2000	305	1,023	6	16	8	4	1,362
2001	475	785	18	43	22	1	1,344
2002	726	670	14	82	28	10	1,530
2003	774	958	17	87	61	7	1,904
2004	374	861	7	55	22	11	1,330
2005	585	1,076	15	62	18	10	1,766
2006	516	1,188	8	61	36	10	1,819
00's Subtotal	3,755	6,561	00's Average Annual Bag: Bow 536; Gun 937				

*November Gun Seasons held in 1989, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 in certain counties

*Check tags without season (<0.05%) marked were assumed gun kills for this table.

Table 4. West Virginia 2006 nonseasonal black bear mortalities by county and type.

County	Roadkills	Illegal	Marauders	Misc.	Total
Barbour	3	0	0	0	3
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Harrison	0	0	0	0	0
Marion	0	0	0	0	0
Marshall	0	0	0	0	0
Monongalia	0	0	0	0	0
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0
Preston	1	0	0	0	1
Taylor	0	0	0	0	0
Tucker	2	0	1	0	3
Wetzel	0	0	0	0	0
Dist. I Subtotal	6	0	1	0	7
Berkeley	0	0	0	0	0
Grant	0	1	0	0	1
Hampshire	1	0	1	1	3
Hardy	2	0	0	0	2
Jefferson	0	0	0	0	0
Mineral	0	0	0	0	0
Morgan	0	0	0	0	0
Pendleton	1	0	1	1	3
Dist. II Subtotal	4	1	2	2	9
Braxton	5	0	1	0	6
Clay	0	0	1	0	1
Lewis	1	0	0	0	1
Nicholas	10	2	1	0	13
Pocahontas	1	0	13	0	14
Randolph	3	0	6	1	10
Upshur	1	0	0	0	1
Webster	3	0	1	2	6
Dist. III Subtotal	24	2	23	3	52
Fayette	7	1	0	2	10
Greenbrier	9	0	3	1	13
McDowell	1	0	0	0	1
Mercer	3	0	0	0	3
Monroe	1	0	0	0	1
Raleigh	3	1	7	1	12
Summers	1	0	0	0	1
Wyoming	0	0	0	1	1
Dist. IV Subtotal	25	2	10	5	42
Boone	0	0	0	0	0
Cabell	0	0	0	0	0
Kanawha	1	2	0	0	3
Lincoln	0	0	0	0	0
Logan	0	0	0	0	0
Mason	0	0	0	0	0
Mingo	0	0	0	0	0
Putnam	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	0	0	0	0	0
Dist. V Subtotal	1	2	0	0	3
Calhoun	0	0	0	0	0
Doddridge	0	0	0	0	0
Gilmer	0	0	0	0	0
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0
Pleasants	0	0	0	0	0
Ritchie	0	1	0	0	1
Roane	1	0	0	0	1
Tyler	0	0	0	0	0
Wirt	0	0	0	0	0
Wood	0	0	0	0	0
Dist. VI Subtotal	1	1	0	0	2
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
State Total	61	8	36	10	115

Table 5. Black bear damage claims paid and payments by county, 2002-2006.

County	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Barbour	\$1,050(3)	\$1,858(4)	\$2,129(4)	\$1,439(2)	\$398(1)
Berkeley	0	0	0	0	0
Boone	\$2,141(10)	\$6,148(4)	\$434(3)	\$2,264(9)	\$372(2)
Braxton	\$1,573(8)	\$443(3)	0	\$3,080(3)	\$3,430(4)
Brooke	0	0	0	0	0
Cabell	0	0	0	0	0
Calhoun	0	0	0	0	0
Clay	\$81(1)	\$1,859(1)	0	\$1,472(3)	\$227(2)
Doddridge	\$275(2)	0	0	0	0
Fayette	\$4,634(7)	\$5,677(8)	\$1,973(4)	\$2,543(6)	\$2,929(4)
Gilmer	0	0	0	0	0
Grant	0	\$2,988(5)	0	\$1,429(6)	\$608(2)
Greenbrier	\$30,658(27)	\$30,766(19)	\$12,300(22)	\$20,075(20)	\$19,468(12)
Hampshire	0	\$2,024(2)	\$127(1)	0	\$825(3)
Hancock	0	0	0	0	0
Hardy	\$4,627(16)	\$5,446(8)	\$2,500(5)	\$1,357(5)	\$3,860 (6)
Harrison	0	0	\$258 (1)	0	0
Jackson	0	0	0	0	0
Jefferson	0	0	0	0	0
Kanawha	\$3,558(8)	\$1,375(7)	\$4,090(1)	\$7,207(6)	\$413(1)
Lewis	0	0	\$49(1)	0	\$124(2)
Lincoln	\$216(1)	0	\$1,800(1)	\$137(1)	0
Logan	\$257(1)	0	0	\$776(3)	\$85(1)
Marion	0	0	0	0	\$803(2)
Marshall	0	0	0	0	\$753(1)
Mason	\$1,454(2)	0	0	0	0
McDowell	\$933(3)	0	0	0	0
Mercer	\$1,100(3)	0	\$1,040(1)	\$2,504(7)	\$842(3)
Mineral	\$360(1)	\$134(2)	\$79(1)	\$101(1)	\$840(1)
Mingo	\$1,412(3)	0	\$505(1)	\$992(3)	\$657(3)
Monongalia	0	\$632(1)	0	\$254(1)	0
Monroe	\$1,156(3)	\$146(2)	\$338(1)	\$2,224(2)	\$5,688(4)
Morgan	0	\$613(2)	\$830(1)	0	0
Nicholas	\$8,188(17)	\$5,243(10)	\$7,017(7)	\$4,939(10)	\$2,915(11)
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0
Pendleton	\$6,109(17)	\$8,245(21)	\$4,307(15)	\$5,314(16)	\$1,446(5)
Pleasants	0	0	0	0	0
Pocahontas	\$13,955(22)	\$12,007(18)	\$7,667(15)	\$7,102(11)	\$8,480(11)
Preston	\$3,738(5)	\$1,015(5)	\$3,170(3)	\$2,950(11)	\$13,178(13)
Putnam	0	0	0	0	0
Raleigh	\$3,454(8)	\$6,128(8)	552(2)	\$4,040(9)	\$379(2)
Randolph	\$3,735(14)	\$8,679(27)	\$12,282(34)	\$28,682(52)	\$15,324(23)
Ritchie	0	0	0	0	0
Roane	0	\$1,917(2)	0	0	0
Summers	\$549(3)	\$2,326(2)	\$1,421(2)	0	0
Taylor	0	0	0	\$1,318 (1)	\$154(1)
Tucker	\$887(5)	\$3,153(5)	\$940(2)	\$2,434(3)	\$6,655(11)
Tyler	0	0	0	0	0
Upshur	0	\$197(2)	\$730(6)	\$110(1)	\$550(2)
Wayne	\$1,392(2)	\$372(1)	0	\$2,168(1)	\$2,168(1)
Webster	\$5,059(17)	\$1,147(6)	\$355(1)	\$1,359(5)	\$3,318(10)
Wetzel	0	0	0	\$877(3)	0
Wirt	0	\$845(1)	\$199(1)	0	0
Wood	0	0	0	0	0
Wyoming	\$85(1)	\$1,460(5)	\$2,602(4)	0	\$1,200(1)
Total	\$102,636(210)	\$112,843 (181)	\$69,694 (140)	\$109,147(201)	\$98,089(145)

WILD TURKEY

by
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&
James E. Evans

Spring Harvest

The 2006 spring gobbler harvest was 11,735 (Table 1). The total was 7.1% higher than the kill of the previous year (10,957). Based on better brood productivity in 2004, biologists had predicted a higher 2006 spring harvest compared to the take in 2004 (10,573).

The top five counties in terms of harvest were Mason (493), Wood (409), Preston (400), Jackson (353), and Ritchie (317). District 6 in westcentral West Virginia again led all districts with a kill of 2,526, followed closely (again!) by District 1 (2,430). The harvest in District 2 and District 3 were up 31% and 21%, respectively. The kill was down 4% in District 4 and remained similar in District 5. Table 2 depicts the harvest by public wildlife management areas (WMA's). The top five areas were Wardensville (49), Neola (42), Potomac (41), Bluestone (41), and Sleepy Creek (34).

The opening day of the regular spring season accounted for 22% of the total spring kill, higher than the 18% opening day harvest in 2005. This is not surprising considering the substantial snowfall in many areas of the State on opening morning of 2005. The second day harvest made up 10% of the total kill, and then declined each day, with spikes of higher kills each Saturday. The first Saturday of the regular season showed a kill of 912 birds, almost 8% of total harvest. During 2006, the first week accounted for 58% of the total kill, compared to 43% in 2005 (Table 3).

The special spring gobbler youth hunt, which occurred the Saturday preceding the regular Monday season opening, yielded a harvest of 307 turkeys. This youth hunt kill was similar to the take of 302 gobblers in 2005, the year the special youth season was initiated.

Fall Harvest

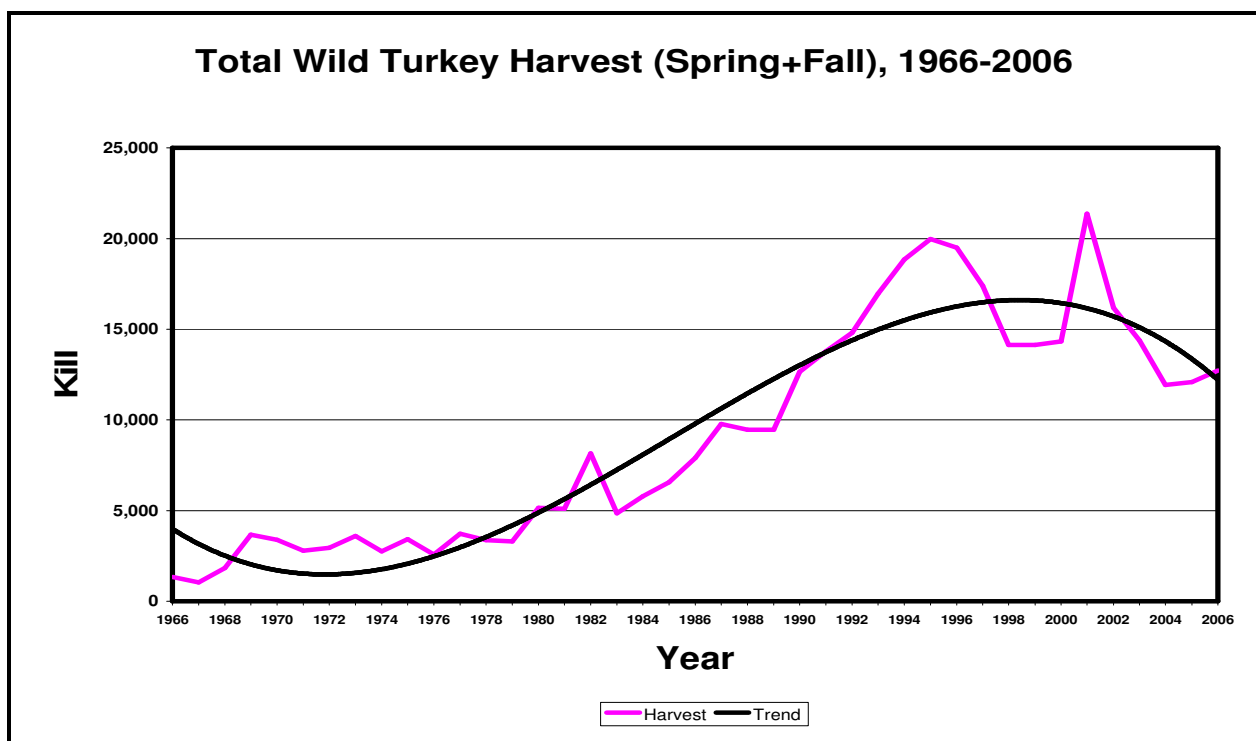
A total of 21 counties were open during the fall 2006 season. The kill of 1,186 was 5% higher than the 2005 fall harvest of 1,130 (Table 4). This increase stopped a decline in harvest that had occurred the last five years.

The top three counties during the 2006 fall hunt were the same as in 2005: Greenbrier (139), Preston (137), and Monroe (102). These were followed by Randolph with a take of 98 and Pocahontas (69). The traditional fall-hunted counties with their 4-week season (except

Preston with two weeks) had 1,018 turkeys checked (86% of the total fall kill). The harvest by WMA's (Table 5) made up 15% of the total kill; this compares to 18% in 2005. Top WMA's were Wardensville (27), Neola (24), Little River (21), Rimel (19), and Shenandoah (15).

There were 222 turkeys (19%) checked on the opening Saturday of the fall season. An additional 8% were added the following Saturday. The opening week accounted for 45% of the total harvest (same as in 2005). The last week of the season made up 11.5% of the kill, also similar to 2005 (Table 6).

The combined spring and fall harvests in 2006 was 12,921—this ranks 14th in terms of total wild turkey harvest since 1966 (Table 7). The 2006 tally was 7% higher than last year. The total spring harvest of gobblers since 1966 (267,199) is more than twice the number of wild turkeys killed in the fall during the same period (110,197).

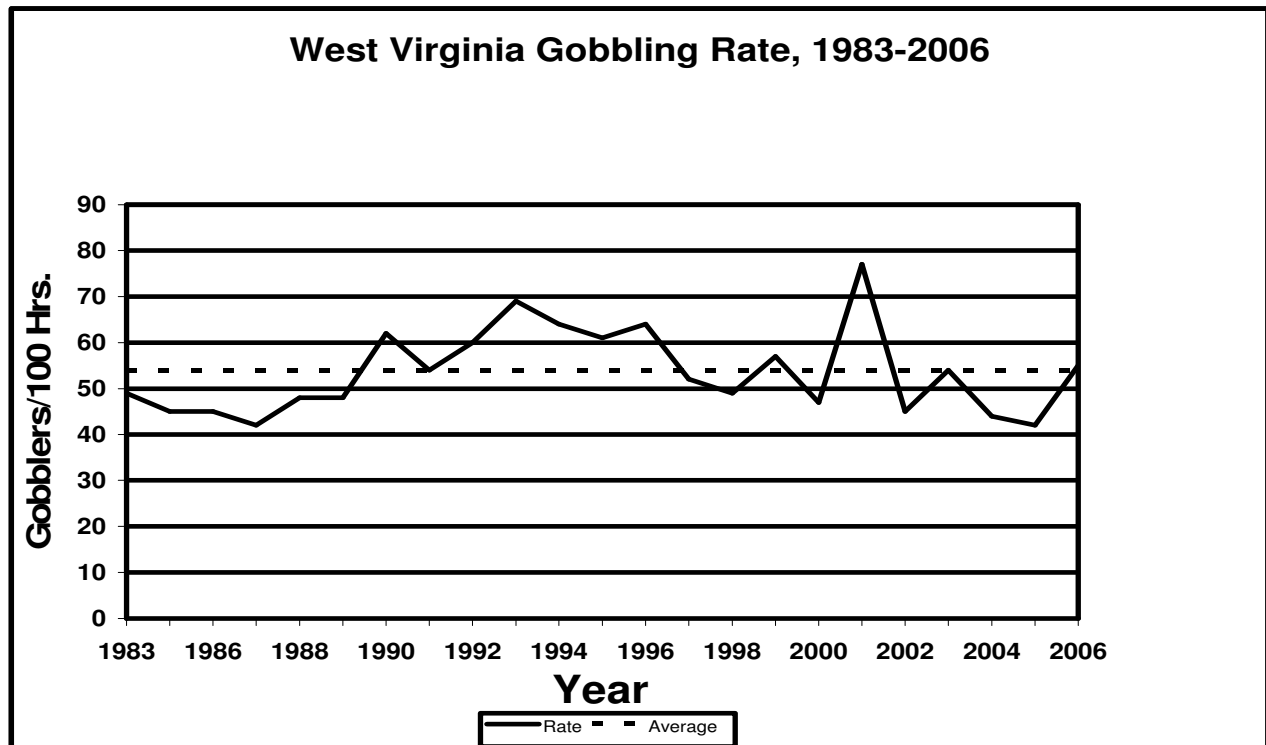


Surveys

Spring Gobbler Survey

The Wildlife Resources Section and the West Virginia Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) conduct an annual survey of spring gobbler hunters. This survey is conducted entirely by volunteer sportsmen that donate their time and effort to gather information to help the DNR manage wild turkeys in the State. The West Virginia Chapter sends survey forms to its members, and the Wildlife Resources Section of the DNR compiles the data from these and other participants. A report is written and distributed free of charge to cooperators.

During 2006, results were compiled from 267 hunters. Cooperators took 2,291 hunting trips and heard 4,983 gobblers. The gobbling rate (55 gobblers heard per 100 hours) was 31% higher than 2005 (42), but similar to the 22-year average (54).



The survey showed that the best gobbling in 2006 was in the Western and Southwestern counties, as has occurred the last two years. The survey provides DNR biologists important data not only on wild turkeys but also ruffed grouse, coyote, overwinter losses of wild turkeys and white-tailed deer, and much other information. Survey data may provide accurate population trend information on white-tailed deer. The survey is also an important forum for hunters to express their opinions and ideas.

Hunters desiring a copy of the annual report are required to participate in the survey. Spring gobbler hunters wanting to help are encouraged to contact Patty Fordyce, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, PO Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241, phone 304-637-0245, fax 304-637-0250 or email pattyfordyce@wvdnr.gov. Those wishing to participate will be sent necessary forms and a questionnaire prior to the spring hunting season. The survey is simple to conduct and a hunter does not have to harvest a gobbler to provide useful data. Most of the information collected deals with what a hunter hears, sees or has an opinion on.

Bowhunter Survey

Results from the Bowhunter Survey normally lag one year behind other surveys. This survey not only monitors white-tailed deer numbers, it also is valuable in determining population and harvest trends of other wildlife species, including wild turkey. Sightings of turkeys by

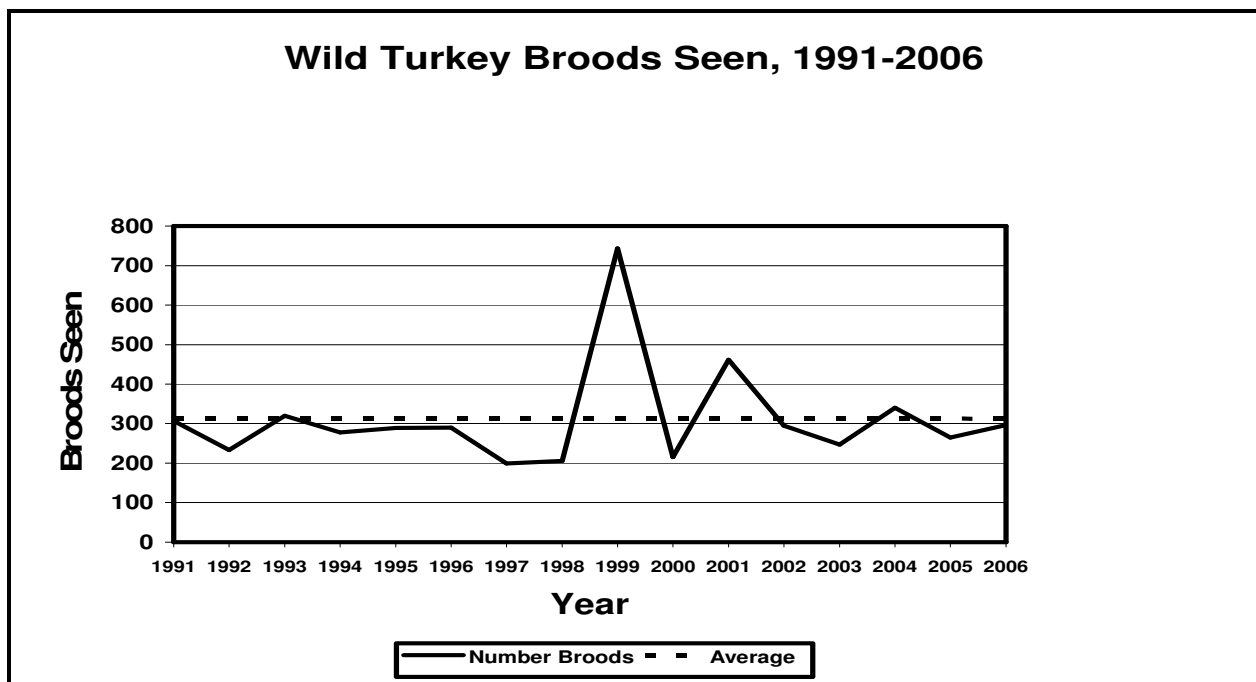
bowhunter cooperators during the fall of 2005 decreased 18% from 2004. The rate of 31 turkeys seen per 100 hours of bowhunting was 47% lower than our record rate (59) and is 26% lower than the long term average (42). This reduction in turkey sightings probably reflects the poor poult productivity that has occurred over the last several years.

Brood Survey

The Wild Turkey Brood Survey helps determine turkey population levels prior to fall and spring hunting seasons. It is a fairly accurate predictor of the spring gobbler harvest two years in advance of the season. The good hatch of 2004 meant an abundance of two-year old birds for 2006—and the predicted higher spring harvest occurred with a kill of almost 800 more birds than 2005.

Since the 2005 brood count was 22% lower than the 2004 count, we predict a lower spring harvest for 2007. The turkey brood picture for 2006 (296 broods) was up from 2005 (265 broods) by 12%, but only 2% higher than our 5-year average. Therefore, we predict a similar to slightly higher gobbler harvest for the spring of 2008.

Summer brood counts have correctly forecasted fall harvests about two-thirds of the years since 1968. The number of fall counties eligible for fall hunting (based on spring harvests) and regional differences in the hatch (particularly brood success in fall hunt counties) complicates fall kill predictions.



Mast Survey

Field surveys of wild foods abundance have been conducted by Wildlife and Law Enforcement Sections of the DNR and the Division of Forestry since 1970. Foods of 18 tree and shrub species that are important wildlife mast are monitored. The average of all mast combined species in 2006 decreased slightly from 2005, but remained for the second time in five years above the long term average. Scrub, red, black and scarlet oak were down slightly from 2005, but the most noticeable decrease was observed for black cherry. Beech crops fared well for the second consecutive year. The index of all oaks combined continued above the long term average, and for the second consecutive year all oak mast was rated good, with white oak having the best production. This now makes three years in a row with near normal acorn yields. Good acorn crops combined with lower turkey populations from recent poor hatches made turkey flocks difficult to locate in 2006, probably frustrating many fall hunters.

Gobbler Survival Study

Second-year trapping for the gobbler survival study was completed April 4, 2006, with 79 toms radioed (15 juveniles, 33 2-year old birds, 31 \geq 3-year olds). After trapping operations ceased and before the first day of gobbler season (April 24), one 2-year old gobbler was killed by a mammalian predator and another adult tom died from unknown predation. Another 2-year old gobbler was illegally killed just prior to the season.

Of the remaining 76 birds, 14 were harvested (18%) and checked as legal kills. There was one jake (7% harvest rate), 6 two-year olds (19%), and 7 \geq 3-year olds (23%) taken. Following is a breakdown by study area:

WV1: (Traditional fall hunt counties – Goal: 30 birds). The study area had 29 radioed toms (7 juveniles, 14 2-year olds, 8 \geq 3-year olds). Only one 2-year old (8% harvest rate) and 2 \geq 3-year old toms (25%) were checked in. No other mortalities occurred in this study area during the season. The overall harvest rate for this area was 10%.

WV2: (Non-Fall Counties – Goal: 45 birds). This area had 47 instrumented gobblers on the opening of spring season (8 juveniles, 17 2-year olds, 22 \geq 3-year olds). One juvenile (12.5%), 5 2-year olds (29%), and 5 \geq 3-year olds (23%) were submitted for checking. One adult and one 2-year old were killed illegally during season (trespass, shooting with hen kill). Two other mortalities (one 2-year old and one adult) occurred during the season (predated/scavenged; roadkill). The overall harvest rate for this area was 22%.

If all “other mortality” birds were considered to have succumbed from firearm related crippling injuries during the spring season, the maximum crippling loss would be 5.3%. With one possible crippling loss from the first study year, the maximum 2-year crippling loss would be 3.3%

Statewide, data for 2 spring seasons show 150 instrumented birds entering the gobbler seasons. Twenty-five gobblers have been legally checked (16.7%), with a harvest rate of 6% (3 of 53 juveniles) for jakes and 22% (22 of 99 adults) for older toms.

There have been no birds harvested during 3 fall hunting periods in counties open to fall season. Annual harvest mortality has remained fairly consistent between the first 2 years of the study, as illustrated in the following table. A harvest rate of 25% for adults occurred in 2005, with a rate of 21% in 2006. The legal take of jakes was 5.3% in 2005, 6.7% in 2006.

Year	# Radioed Birds	Legal Spring Harvest	Illegal Spring Harvest (During Season)	Maximum Potential Crippling Loss	Legal Fall Harvest	Total Kill (Legal, Illegal, Max Crippling Loss)
2005	74	11 (14.9%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)	0	13 (17.6%)
2006	76	14 (18.4%)	2 (2.6%)	4 (5.3%)	0	20 (25.0%)
Total	150	25 (16.7%)	3 (2.0%)	5 (3.3%)	0	33 (22.0%)
2-year Average	75	12.5 (16.7%)	1.5 (2.0%)	2.5 (3.3%)	0	16.5 (22.0%)

Data from 2005 suggested gobblers on public areas may be harvested at a much higher rate than toms on private lands. Preliminary figures for the 2006 spring season show at least 7 of the 13 legally checked-in toms (54%) were public land birds. Over 60% of radioed birds were either captured or being tracked on private property. This, again, indicates that toms on public lands are probably receiving higher hunter pressure and increased kill rates than those on privately owned areas.

From September 1, 2005 to June 1, 2006, there were 82 gobblers who survived the 14-day censor period. There were 27 (32.9%) mortalities during this 9 month span: 14 (51.8%) of these birds checked in during the 2006 spring season; 5 (18.5%) were killed illegally; 4 (14.8%) died from predation/crippling loss during the one month gobbler season; 3(11.1%) succumbed from predation (primarily mammalian) during the other 8 months; one (3.7%) birds radio signal disappeared during the period. Of the 27 mortalities (33% mortality rate), 85% could be attributed to firearms related activities. Survival during the 9-month period was 67% (compared to 73% during same period in 2005), most of which can be attributed to adding predation-related kills during the spring season to the max cripple loss category—and the fact that juvenile birds made up only 18% of birds tracked (compared to about 50% in 2005).

Fall trapping in September and October of 2006 added 22 birds (5 adults, 6 yearlings, 11 juveniles), bringing the total number of radioed gobblers back to 73. Mortalities and radio failures during October, November and December has resulted in a sample of 64 toms currently (January 2007) being tracked. Winter trapping operations have been initiated, with a goal of 75 instrumented gobblers just prior to the 2007 spring gobbler season.

2007 Hunting Regulations

The youth spring season hunt will open Saturday, April 21, prior to the regular Monday season opening on April 23. This will be the third year for the youth hunt—current regulations specify that **youngsters eight through 14 years of age will be able to participate in the youth hunt when accompanied by a licensed adult who must be at least 21 years old.** The adult cannot carry a gun, and must stay close enough to render advice. The bag limit is one and only shotguns using 4, 5, or 6 shot are legal. The regular spring gobbler season lasts four weeks, ending on May 19.

The 2007 fall hunting season will open October 20. The season will close October 27 in counties open to the one-week season (these counties determined by the 2007 spring harvests), November 3 in Preston County, and November 17 in the traditional fall hunt counties that are open to four weeks of hunting. Hunters should review the “Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summary”, which should be available in July 2007, for counties eligible for the fall turkey season.

Table 1. Spring harvest of wild turkeys in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

County	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Barbour	254	221	188	200	176
Brooke	159	140	144	119	121
Hancock	120	128	182	131	137
Harrison	419	306	277	270	254
Marion	320	255	190	166	190
Marshall	418	363	278	264	306
Monongalia	394	351	292	235	310
Ohio	162	138	116	109	137
Preston	499	454	348	375	400
Taylor	161	156	116	102	101
Tucker	108	102	53	88	98
Wetzel	324	236	200	244	200
Dist. I Subtotal	3,338	2,850	2,384	2,303	2,430
Berkeley	79	69	74	83	107
Grant	162	156	138	108	130
Hampshire	181	224	200	192	220
Hardy	187	172	217	127	226
Jefferson	40	33	40	43	51
Mineral	134	124	86	108	135
Morgan	68	81	61	85	116
Pendleton	142	133	124	108	136
Dist. II Subtotal	993	992	940	854	1,121
Braxton	270	289	227	234	282
Clay	78	95	83	74	82
Lewis	442	375	279	268	258
Nicholas	222	199	181	175	226
Pocahontas	157	132	74	97	128
Randolph	192	204	165	132	176
Upshur	346	274	225	206	258
Webster	89	117	96	68	108
Dist. III Subtotal	1,796	1,685	1,330	1,254	1,518
Fayette	344	309	271	264	261
Greenbrier	350	289	239	276	298
McDowell	241	220	214	182	270
Mercer	337	277	294	389	311
Monroe	191	170	167	217	200
Raleigh	318	294	299	328	264
Summers	302	254	316	387	287
Wyoming	250	237	166	172	243
Dist. IV Subtotal	2,333	2,050	1,966	2,215	2,134
Boone	150	173	189	141	159
Cabell	168	171	141	152	146
Kanawha	278	260	260	297	263
Lincoln	229	220	208	227	223
Logan	156	163	159	155	169
Mason	559	473	400	451	493
Mingo	98	95	81	92	100
Putnam	297	243	211	233	246
Wayne	231	238	198	244	207
Dist. V Subtotal	2,166	2,036	1,847	1,992	2,006
Calhoun	139	189	183	164	193
Doddridge	338	245	191	214	199
Gilmer	216	224	186	183	195
Jackson	351	468	250	333	353
Pleasants	132	113	89	90	97
Ritchie	343	437	291	341	317
Roane	298	326	294	297	293
Tyler	231	246	178	199	198
Wirt	276	317	215	234	272
Wood	435	357	229	284	409
Dist. VI Subtotal	2,759	2,922	2,106	2,339	2,526
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
State Total	13,385	12,535	10,573	10,957	11,735

Table 2. Spring turkey harvest by locality in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

Land Type	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Monongahela NF	Beaver Dam	15	12	4	3	7
	Blackwater	27	22	12	40	25
	Cheat	19	23	11	6	9
	Cranberry	29	37	26	15	20
	Little River	48	28	17	12	26
	Neola	51	47	21	24	42
	Otter Creek	27	9	14	12	14
	Potomac	67	57	39	27	41
	Rimel	23	37	14	21	25
	Tea Creek	10	12	5	3	18
Monongahela NF Total		316	284	163	163	227
George Washington NF	Shenandoah	14	15	20	15	16
	Wardensville	37	42	46	29	49
George Washington NF Total		51	57	66	44	65
Jefferson NF	Potts Creek	6	5	2	3	5
Jefferson NF Total		6	5	2	3	5
National River	New River Gorge	19	6	10	18	10
National River Total		19	6	10	18	10
State Land	Allegheny	3	0	2	5	4
	Amherst/Plymouth	5	7	8	13	8
	Anawalt	10	3	2	5	4
	Bear Rocks	0	0	0	2	1
	Beech Fork	16	22	19	17	17
	Berwind	2	17	11	2	0
	Beury Mtn	1	1	3	1	5
	Big Ugly	0	0	1	1	1
	Bluestone	38	31	44	38	41
	Burnsville	24	19	14	11	26
	Cabwaylingo Sf	2	5	7	3	4
	Calvin Price Sf	4	1	1	4	2
	Camp Creek Sf	5	8	4	3	7
	Castleman Run	1	3	2	5	4
	Center Branch	1	2	0	2	0
	Conaway Run	1	0	3	1	0
	Coopers Rock Sf	18	14	9	6	8
	Cornstalk	14	10	13	17	19
	East Lynn	7	7	9	14	6
	Edwards Run	0	1	0	0	0
	Elk River	9	15	14	15	17
	Fork Creek	0	7	8	1	3
	Frozen Camp	1	0	1	2	3
	Greenbrier Sf	5	1	3	2	4
	Handley	0	0	1	0	0
	Hilbert	1	0	0	1	0
	Hillcrest	19	17	25	26	19
	Horse Creek	1	2	3	0	5
	Hughes River	14	23	8	13	19
	Kanawha Sf	4	7	10	10	8
	Kumbrabow Sf	5	6	5	1	8

Table 2. Continued.

Land Type	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
State Land	Lantz Farm	1	0	0	0	0
	Laurel Lake	12	10	5	8	4
	Lewis Wetzel	9	9	9	8	9
	McClintic	14	18	20	17	25
	Meadow River	1	0	0	0	0
	Morris Creek	0	0	0	2	0
	Nathaniel Mnt	4	2	3	3	4
	Panther Sf	5	13	10	7	14
	Pleasants Creek	1	3	6	0	3
	Plum Orchard	5	5	3	4	1
	Pruntytown	4	3	1	2	2
	R D Bailey	15	18	15	12	24
	Ritchie Mines	5	10	7	5	7
	Seneca Sf	10	3	1	5	5
	Shannondale	1	4	3	6	3
	Short Mnt	4	6	9	5	4
	Sleepy Creek	14	26	22	13	34
	Snake Hill	2	2	8	1	5
	Springfield	6	10	0	0	0
	Stonecoal	3	8	6	4	3
	Stonewall Jackson	35	34	24	20	26
	Sutton Res	2	4	1	0	1
	Tate Lohr	4	1	0	0	1
	The Jug	13	10	7	15	2
	Upper Mud River	1	0	0	1	2
	Wallback	2	1	3	4	1
	Widmyer	0	0	0	2	1
	Summersville	1	2	5	5	3
	Underwood	1	2	2	1	0
	Thorn Creek	0	0	0	0	1
	South Branch	0	0	0	0	1
State Land Total		386	433	400	371	429
Private Land		12,605	11,732	9,920	10,351	10,985
Unknown		2	18	12	7	14
State Total		13,385	12,535	10,573	10,957	11,735

Table 3. Spring wild turkey harvest by week of season, 2005-2006.

Week of Season	2005		2006	
	N	%	N	%
Youth	302	3%	307	3%
Week 1	4,747	43%	6,849	58%
Week 2	2,535	23%	2,340	20%
Week 3	1,754	16%	1,361	12%
Week 4	1,508	14%	804	7%
Unknown	111	1%	74	1%
All	10,957	100%	11,735	100%

Table 4. Fall harvest of wild turkeys in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

County	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Brooke	23	18	12	10	5
Hancock	33	9	12	7	7
Harrison	51	0	0	0	0
Marion	39	0	0	0	0
Marshall	28	16	35	0	20
Monongalia	43	30	0	0	0
Ohio	16	21	17	15	10
Preston	238	126	125	107	137
Taylor	35	0	0	0	0
Tucker	80	22	41	30	27
Dist I Subtotal	586	242	242	169	206
Berkeley	27	30	42	13	24
Grant	136	65	73	59	59
Hampshire	139	116	135	74	68
Hardy	119	89	120	68	63
Mineral	65	38	62	34	59
Morgan	36	20	31	24	31
Pendleton	110	63	45	52	55
Dist II Subtotal	632	421	508	324	359
Lewis	77	0	0	0	0
Nicholas	161	81	106	82	67
Pocahontas	161	100	49	75	69
Randolph	197	81	69	73	98
Upshur	98	0	0	0	0
Webster	85	31	55	43	48
Dist III Subtotal	779	293	279	273	282
Greenbrier	308	245	165	108	139
Monroe	203	184	163	86	102
Summers	0	0	0	51	0
Dist IV Subtotal	511	429	328	245	241
Mason	103	97	0	74	0
Dist V Subtotal	103	97	0	74	0
Doddridge	29	0	0	0	0
Jackson	0	100	0	0	0
Pleasants	26	1	0	0	0
Ritchie	0	64	0	0	0
Tyler	0	38	0	0	0
Wirt	65	77	0	45	37
Wood	77	79	0	0	60
Dist VI Subtotal	197	359	0	45	97
Unknown	0	0	0	0	1
State Total	2,808	1,841	1,357	1,130	1,186

Table 5. Fall turkey harvest by locality in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

Land Type	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Monongahela NF	Beaver Dam	11	12	1	5	3
	Blackwater	23	3	15	10	11
	Cheat	11	8	2	6	9
	Cranberry	12	14	10	14	6
	Little River	36	15	9	13	21
	Neola	48	35	26	12	24
	Otter Creek	16	0	3	5	2
	Potomac	22	10	7	14	6
	Rimel	25	13	11	15	19
	Tea Creek	5	5	4	8	5
Monongahela NF Total		209	115	88	102	106
George Washington NF	Shenandoah	13	8	9	12	15
	Wardensville	24	28	24	8	27
George Washington NF Total		37	36	33	20	42
Jefferson NF	Potts Creek	2	4	4	4	2
Jefferson NF Total		2	4	4	4	2
State Land	Allegheny	0	0	1	2	4
	Bear Rocks	0	1	0	7	0
	Becky Creek	2	0	0	0	1
	Bluestone	0	2	9	27	1
	Calvin Price Sf	2	9	1	2	2
	Castleman Run	0	1	1	1	0
	Coopers Rock Sf	2	0	1	0	0
	Cornstalk	12	7	0	2	0
	Edwards Run	0	1	0	0	0
	Greenbrier Sf	3	5	2	3	4
	Hillcrest	4	0	0	0	0
	Hughes River	0	3	0	2	4
	Kumbrabow Sf	4	0	0	0	1
	Mcclintic	4	6	0	4	0
	Nathaniel Mnt	0	1	0	1	0
	Seneca Sf	0	0	6	5	2
	Short Mnt	3	4	3	6	6
	Sleepy Creek	11	3	11	2	4
	Snake Hill	1	0	0	0	0
	Springfield	2	3	0	0	0
	Stonecoal	4	0	0	0	0
	Stonewall Jackson	13	0	0	0	0
	Underwood Wma	0	1	0	0	1
	Widmyer	0	1	0	1	0
	Summersville	4	5	0	8	2
State Land Total		71	53	35	73	32
Private Land		2,484	1,631	1,197	930	1,004
Unknown		5	2	0	1	0
Grand Total		2,808	1,841	1,357	1,130	1,186

Table 6. Fall wild turkey harvest by week of season, 2005-2006.

Week of season	2005		2006	
	N	%	N	%
Week 1	511	45%	528	45%
Week 2	250	22%	246	21%
Week 3	180	16%	202	17%
Week 4	120	11%	137	12%
Unknown	69	6%	73	6%
All	1,130	100%	1,186	100%

Table 7. Total spring and fall wild turkey harvest, West Virginia, 1966-2006.

Year	Spring	Fall	Total	Rank
1966	12	1,334	1,346	40
1967	42	989	1,031	41
1968	134	1,697	1,831	39
1969	243	3,430	3,673	29
1970	370	3,020	3,390	32
1971	421	2,374	2,795	36
1972	589	2,353	2,942	35
1973	554	3,038	3,592	30
1974	596	2,158	2,754	37
1975	585	2,827	3,412	31
1976	721	1,860	2,581	38
1977	719	2,998	3,717	28
1978	566	2,803	3,369	33
1979	873	2,421	3,294	34
1980	1,459	3,696	5,155	25
1981	1,970	3,135	5,105	26
1982	2,458	5,684	8,142	21
1983	2,627	2,224	4,851	27
1984	3,387	2,414	5,801	24
1985	4,215	2,343	6,558	23
1986	4,774	3,130	7,904	22
1987	5,665	4,114	9,779	18
1988	6,526	2,939	9,465	19
1989	7,245	2,204	9,449	20
1990	9,152	3,504	12,656	15
1991	10,097	3,690	13,787	13
1992	11,299	3,518	14,817	8
1993	13,428	3,536	16,964	6
1994	15,501	3,351	18,852	4
1995	16,770	3,211	19,981	2
1996	16,618	2,870	19,488	3
1997	14,021	3,385	17,406	5
1998	12,467	1,678	14,145	11
1999	11,241	2,901	14,142	12
2000	12,794	1,541	14,335	10
2001	17,875	3,505	21,380	1
2002	13,385	2,808	16,193	7
2003	12,535	1,841	14,376	9
2004	10,573	1,357	11,930	17
2005	10,957	1,130	12,087	16
2006	11,735	1,186	12,921	14
Total	267,199	110,197	377,396	

WILD BOAR

by
Thomas L. Dotson

Hunters killed 14 wild boars during the 2006 season. Archery hunters took 4 and firearms hunters killed 10. Most came from near the original wild boar release site at the head of Spruce-Laurel Creek in Boone County.

The first boar season was in 1979 and the kills have ranged from 3 that year to 158 in 1995, then declined to 38 in 2002. In 2003 the December segment of the season was removed. Since then, the results of the annual harvests have been 5, 7, 12 and 14, respectively (Table 1).

The main reason for the decline of wild boar in the four southern counties of Boone, Logan, Raleigh, and Wyoming is believed to be habitat degradation resulting in poor reproduction and survival. Specifically, mountain top mining and logging have eliminated much of the once mature oak forest that was favored by the boar.

Biologists do not believe that boar hunting contributed to the population decline. Past seasons have been short and hunter participation restricted by permits. However, season restrictions are the only methods available that might increase populations. A single firearms season scheduled in late October is designed to reduce the harvest and provide an increased number of boar the additional time needed to occupy more productive habitats. Traditionally hunters have been less successful during the October gun season. Weather conditions are usually warm and dry and leaf fall makes boar and boar sign more difficult to find. This new harvest strategy accomplished the objective and reduced the harvest.

Since the season changes in 2003 the harvest has shown progressive though modest increases. Hunters report more sign scattered over a larger area. This is cause for cautious optimism. However, accelerated mining activity continues to degrade habitat and limit hunter access. As a result, the future of wild boar hunting is still uncertain.

Biologists with the Division of Natural Resources continue to monitor wild boar densities. The February 2004 survey showed a severely decimated boar population. The areas surveyed were revisited in 2006 to confirm or disprove population increases indicated by harvest and hunter reports. Boar sign is more abundant than found in 2004. Evidence of boar is still concentrated near the original release site near the Head of Spruce-Laurel Creek in Boone County.

Table 1. Hunting statistics for West Virginia wild boar seasons, 1979-2006.

Year	Gun Permits Available	Gun Kill		Archery Kill	Total Kill
		Early Season*	December		
1979	200	3			3
1980	600	9			9
1981	1,200	31			31
1982	1,500	69			69
1983	1,500	50			50
1984	3,000	76			76
1985	3,000	52			52
1986	4,000	29		6	35
1987	5,000	63		11	74
1988	5,000	29		5	34
1989	6,000	29	79	8	116
1990	6,000	16	62	8	86
1991	6,000	20	38	1	59
1992	6,000	39	72	19	130
1993	6,000	13	61	8	82
1994	6,000	21	53	12	86
1995	6,000	34	105	19	158
1996	6,000	51	56	32	139
1997	6,000	43	61	37	141
1998	6,000	16	30	12	58
1999	6,000	19	56	21	96
2000	6,000	7	36	3	46
2001	4,000	11	14	18	43
2002	4,000	3	26	9	38
2003	Permit Not Required	3	-	2	5
2004	Permit Not Required	3	-	4	7
2005	Permit Not Required	10	-	2	12
2006	Permit Not Required	10	-	4	14
Total		759	749	241	1,749

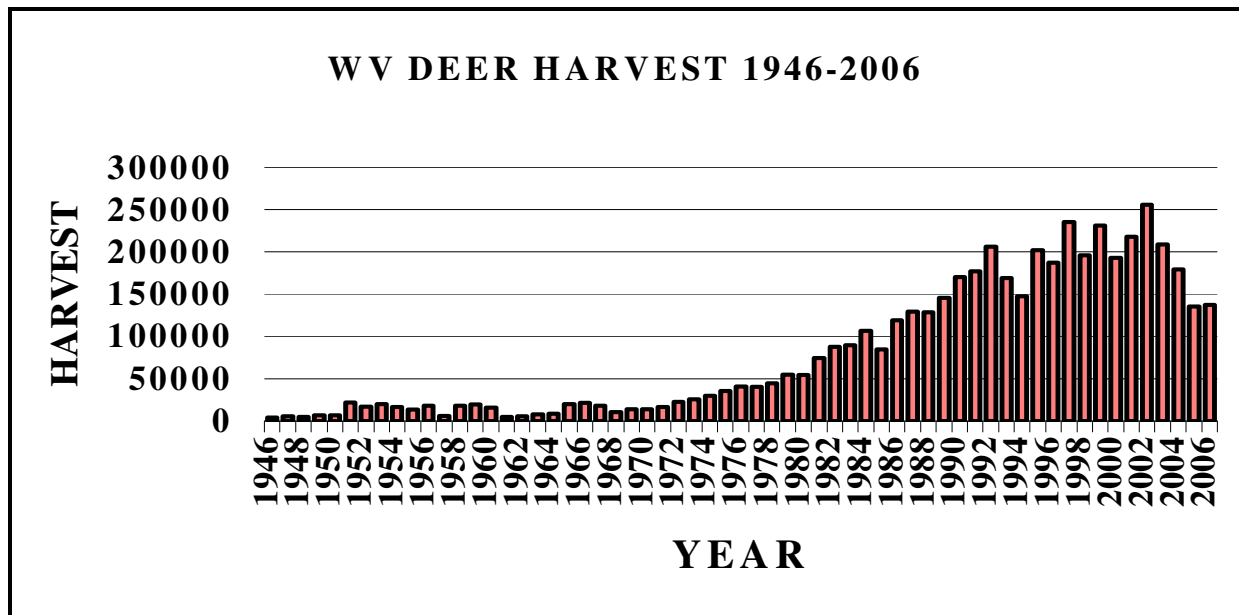
*Early Season: Held in late October or early November.

WHITE-TAILED DEER

by
James M. Crum

Deer Harvest 2006

The following Tables 1 through 9 contains the 2006 white-tailed deer hunter harvest information for each of West Virginia's 55 counties and the various public lands scattered across the state. In 2006, deer hunters harvested a total of 137,392 deer in the combined deer seasons. This is a 1.5% increase from the 2005 harvest and 31% less than the previous five-year harvest average of 199,090. The combined deer season harvest for 2006 is the seventeenth largest total deer harvest on record for West Virginia. The 2006 total deer harvest represents one deer killed for every 107 acres of deer habitat in the state (Table 9), and a 27% harvest decrease from that of 10 years ago. From 1945 through 2006, 4,900,716 deer have been recorded as harvested in West Virginia. Fifty-nine percent (2,899,649) of the total recorded deer harvest of the past 61 years has occurred in the last 15 years.



In 2006, the traditional bucks-only firearm season harvest of antlered bucks was 65,923, an increase of 16% from the 2005 harvest (Table 1). This is 15% less than the five-year average harvest of 77,966, and ranks nineteenth among all past years. The 2006 antlerless season deer harvest decreased by 17% from 2005 and was down 62% from the record harvest of 104,199 recorded in 2002. A total of 39,360 antlerless deer (Table 5) were taken in an antlerless season where hunter opportunity was reduced in 13 counties from that of 2005. The antlerless season was open in 2006 for 22 days on private land in 21 counties. In 13 counties and portions of three more, the season was open for 18 days on private land with a one deer bag limit and limited licenses available in 9 of the counties. The season was closed in 18 counties and portions of

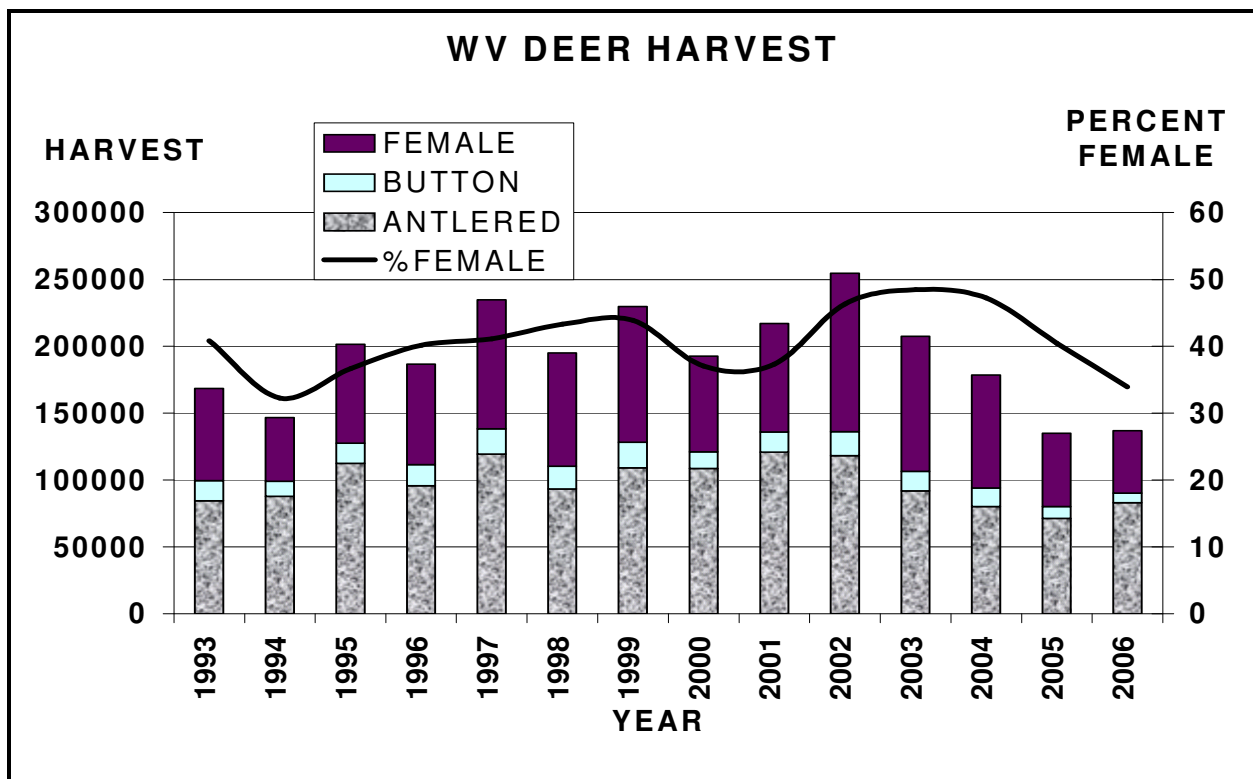
three counties. The antlerless season was closed on the vast majority of National Forest land (Table 6) and open for 6 days on 23 State owned or leased Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's). Qualifying youth and Class Q License (physically challenged) holders had an additional three-day antlerless-only season on private land and 21 WMA's in counties open to the traditional antlerless season. The 2006 antlerless season harvest was the lowest since 1994, seventeenth highest on record, and 49% less than the five-year average antlerless harvest of 76,730. In 2006 the maximum season bag limit for antlerless deer season was reduced by one from that of the previous year and new licensing requirements removed the option to hunt antlerless deer on an unused RG or RRG stamp. The 2006 archery season harvest of 25,219 recorded deer increased 15% from that of the 2005 archery season. This year's archery harvest was fifteenth highest on record and 16% below the five-year average of 29,976 (Table 3). The 2006 muzzleloader season harvest was 6,890, a decrease of 24% from 2005, 52% below the five-year average harvest of 14,417, and the seventeenth highest harvest recorded for this season (Table 7). New licensing requirements to participate in the muzzleloader deer season combined with removing the opportunity to take a deer of either sex in three counties and limiting the hunting for an additional either sex deer with a muzzleloader in another four counties contributed to the lower 2006 muzzleloader deer season harvest.

In 2006, hunting on Sunday was permissible in West Virginia for the sixth year since 1956. In 2001 all counties were open to hunting on Sunday. In 2002, 20 of 55 counties were open to hunting on Sunday. In 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 14 of 55 counties were open to hunting on Sunday. These 14 counties had eight additional days available for deer hunting. All eight days were open for archery hunters who recorded taking 785 deer on Sundays, or three percent of the total 2006 archery harvest. One Sunday was open for firearms deer hunting, the Sunday after Thanksgiving November 26, and 386 deer were recorded as harvested.

In the 2006 deer season, of the 51 counties open to the two-week bucks-only season, the desired buck harvest per square mile was exceeded in 11 counties indicating the deer population needs to be reduced in a minimum of 10% of the deer habitat in the state. Of the remaining 40 counties, 15 were lower than the desired harvest and 25 were within one buck per square mile of the desired buck harvest for the county. In contrast to 2005, 15 counties, or 16% of deer habitat in the state, were above the desired buck harvest per square mile and of the remaining 36 counties, 26 were lower than the desired harvest and 10 were within one buck per square mile of the desired buck harvest for the county. The success of past antlerless deer harvests has helped lower the number of counties in 2006 that exceed the desired buck harvest per square mile. On the other hand, the reduction of antlerless deer hunting opportunity in the past two years has increased the deer herd as reflected in the number of counties that are now not below the desired harvest.

The harvest of antlerless deer is the key to healthier, heavier, and more productive deer herds. This is because there are natural limits to the number of deer the land can support. When these natural limits are exceeded deer body weights, reproductive rates, antler development, and herd health declines, including an increased likelihood that deer will die over winter. If deer exceed natural limits long enough habitat quality is reduced which produces a long-term reduction in the natural limit of deer the land can support. To avoid these problems a minimum of 70 females for every 100 bucks is generally required just to stabilize a deer herd. If a decrease

in the herd is warranted the percentage of females needs to be above 40%. Prior to the 2000 deer season, West Virginia's deer herd was on track for a better healthier herd. Decreases in antlerless harvest in the 2000 and 2001 deer seasons temporarily slowed progress toward a better deer herd but, with landowners and hunters in the 2002 through 2004 deer season recognizing the need to harvest antlerless deer, the pace toward a better deer herd quickened. From 2002 through 2004 deer season the recorded antlerless deer harvest exceeded the traditional firearm antlered buck harvest. The percentage of does in the statewide harvest has exceeded 40% for the 2002 through 2004 seasons even though the total harvest in 2003 and 2004 declined. In 2005 the reductions in hunter opportunity to harvest antlerless deer resulted in a lower total deer harvest and a reduction of the percentage of female deer in the harvest but the percentage was still 40%. In 2006 the antlered deer harvest rebounded somewhat but with further reductions in the opportunity to harvest antlerless deer the percentage of female deer in the harvest was well below the 40% mark. This will allow the deer herd to increase in 2007. Hunters and landowners must continually assess their expectations of the proper number of deer sightings versus the visible impacts deer have on vegetation and manage the state's deer herd by participating and encouraging antlerless deer harvest where needed to benefit not only the deer herd, but all wildlife dependent on our state's woodland habitat.



Special Deer Management Areas

In 2006, hunters took 266 deer in the special urban deer season. This special archery deer-hunting season is available to incorporated cities and homeowner associations, which may open 14 days prior to the opening of archery season and close December 31. During this special

season two deer may be taken which do not count toward the regular archery deer season bag limit. In 2006, four cities reported harvesting 256 deer, which are, included in Tables 3, 4, 8, and 9. In addition, 10 deer were harvested during urban deer archery hunts conducted by one homeowners association. This is the third year that homeowner associations have taken advantage of the special urban archery deer season to address deer population management. For information regarding implementing a special season contact your local city government or homeowners association.

The antlerless deer harvest (Tables 5, 6, 8, and 9) do not include 75 deer harvested during the thirteenth year of a controlled six-day deer hunt at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO). The NRAO continues to set the example to demonstrate that deer hunting and thus good land stewardship is compatible with almost any other activities taking place on an area.

In the special youth and Class Q deer season 1,798 antlerless deer were reported harvested and are included in antlerless deer harvest tables 5, 6, 8, and 9. The special youth and Class Q season was open on private land in any county, or portion thereof, open to the antlerless deer season and on 21 DNR Wildlife Management Areas across the state on October 28, 2006 and again December 25 and 26, 2006. This was the ninth year this special season was held. To participate hunters had to hold a Class Q license or be a youth at least 10 and no more than 14 years of age on the day of the season, and be accompanied by a licensed adult at least 21 years of age. The daily bag limit was one antlerless deer, which did not count against the hunter's annual antlerless deer season bag limit. Youth and Class Q hunters harvested 1,594 deer on October 28th and an additional 30 and 174 deer on December 25th and 26th, respectively. The recorded harvest for the 2006 special Youth and Class Q deer season decreased by 32% from that of 2005. This reduced harvest can be attributed to the decrease in counties open to antlerless deer season. The harvest for the second and third day of the season was down 86% and 24%, respectively, from reported harvest in 2005. This decrease can probably be attributed to the season coinciding with Christmas.

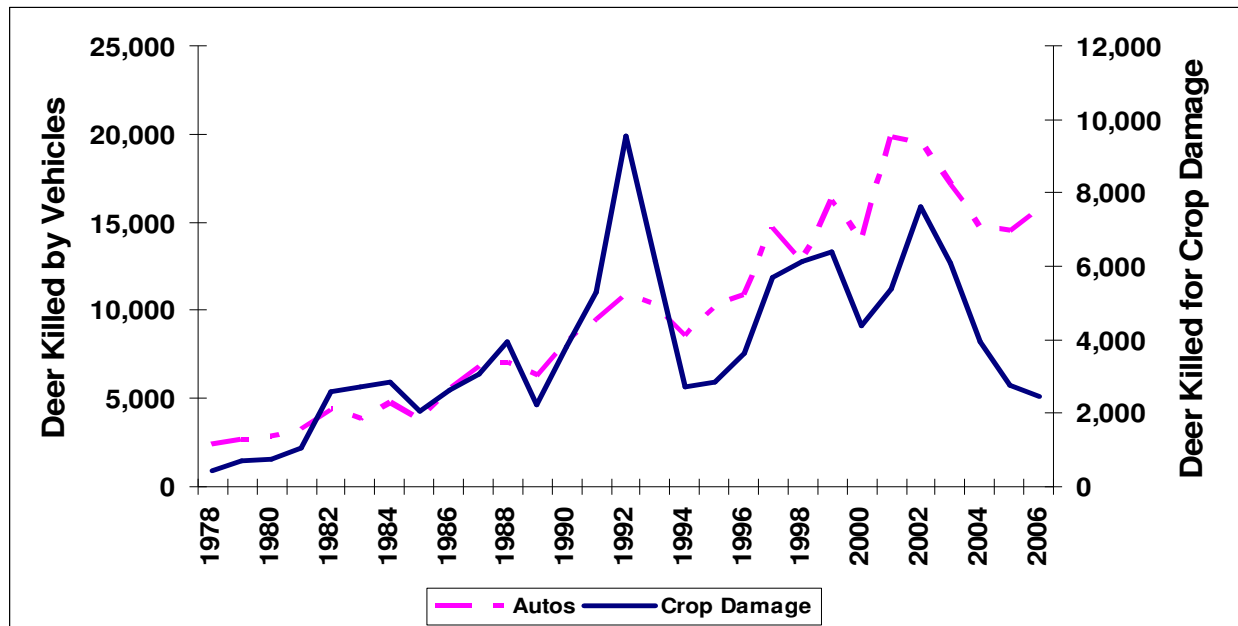
Nonseasonal Mortalities

Nonseasonal mortalities are those deer deaths that are not associated with the harvest of deer by hunters. The graph below depicts nonseasonal deer mortalities that are associated with human/deer conflicts (i.e. vehicle collisions and crop damage). The public, DNR Conservation Officers, and DNR Wildlife Resources personnel routinely report nonseasonal mortalities. The WV Department of Transportation, Division of Highways (DOH) - Traffic Engineering Division, provides monthly summaries of road kill deer that are encountered by DOH personnel. DNR Conservation Officers provide wildlife damage investigation reports from which the number of deer killed for crop damage is obtained.

The reported nonseasonal mortalities from vehicle collisions and crop damage increased 6% from 17,267 in 2005 to 18,361 in 2006. Deer killed on crop damage permits decreased in DNR Districts 1, 2 and 6, and increased in DNR Districts 3, 4 and 5. Overall, deer killed through the crop damage permit system decreased 12% in 2006. Reported road kill (auto) mortalities

decreased 10% in 2006 in DNR District 3, and increased in DNR District 1, 2 4, 5 and 6 by 23%, 12%, 1%, 6%, and 5%, respectively. Overall, road kill mortalities increased 10% in 2006.

The occurrence of deer reportedly killed by collisions with vehicles and deer reported as killed for crop damage follow similar trends. Although other factors such as deer food supply (such as acorns), number and average speed of vehicles, and crop growing conditions like drought conditions influence these trends, a major factor is deer population (see graph).



Deer Hunting Outlook

In the 2007 antlerless deer season the DNR proposes that all of 36 counties and portions of 5 additional counties be open to antlerless deer Class N hunting. The DNR proposes on private land in these counties there be a 22-day split antlerless season, 12 days of which would be concurrent with the traditional bucks-only deer season. Private land in these counties would open from November 19 through December 8, and open again December 26 through December 29. Public land in these counties would be open for antlerless deer Class N hunting only from December 3 through December 8, except all National Forest land in Monroe County would be closed to antlerless hunting, as well as, Wallback WMA in Roane and Kanawha counties and Elk River WMA in Braxton County. The antlerless deer Class N season is proposed to be closed in 14 counties and portions of five counties, including all National Forest lands in Greenbrier, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Randolph, Tucker and Webster counties. Hunters would need to apply for limited permits to hunt during the antlerless deer Class N season in Braxton County and portions of Fayette, Grant and Pendleton counties, as well as, eight Wildlife Management Areas. Nineteen counties are proposed to have an antlerless deer Class N season bag limit of 4, five counties and portions of five more counties are proposed to have a bag limit of 2 and nine counties and portions of six more are proposed to have a bag limit of one antlerless deer during the antlerless deer Class N season. During the 2007 muzzleloader deer season the DNR proposes

that in counties with an antlerless deer Class N season bag limit of two or more hunters would be able to take two deer of either sex during the muzzleloader season, provided the second muzzleloader deer is taken on an additional muzzleloader deer stamp, RM for residents and RMM for nonresident hunters. In counties with a one antlerless deer Class N season bag limit hunters in the 2007 muzzleloader season could take one deer of either sex but the second muzzleloader season deer taken on the RM or RMM additional muzzleloader deer stamp could only be an antlered deer, provided the hunter has not filled the maximum annual bag limit (excluding special urban archery hunts) of three antlered bucks. Antlerless deer will not be allowed to be taken on an unfilled RG or RGG additional deer license during the 2007 antlerless deer Class N season or muzzleloader season. Thus, the maximum total season deer bag limit that can be taken on antlerless Class N licenses in 2007 is four and maximum total deer bag limit during muzzleloader season is proposed to be two which remains the same as that of 2006. Again, as in 2006, a split three-day Special Youth and Class Q antlerless deer season is proposed to be held on October 27 and December 24 and 25 on private land and 46 wildlife management areas and two State Forests in 51 counties. Unlike last year the proposed 2007 Special Youth and class Q antlerless deer season would not be limited to those counties open to antlerless (Class N) deer hunting but the season would be open in the 51 counties that are open to a firearm deer seasons. Therefore, this season **would be closed** in Logan, Mingo, McDowell, or Wyoming counties. In addition, all National Forest lands, six State Forests, and 27 wildlife management areas **would be closed** to this season. (Please refer to the 2007 Hunting and Trapping Regulations summary for further details on all deer hunting seasons because the above proposed seasons and bag limits have not been approved by the Natural Resources Commission at this time.)

White-tailed deer hunting season regulations for 2007 will be published and available to hunters in July of 2007. This newsprint like pamphlet contains complete information on gun, archery, muzzleloading, and antlerless deer hunting, plus other hunting regulations on turkey, bear, boar, and small game. Hunters will be able to obtain a copy from any DNR office or any business that sells West Virginia hunting licenses or visiting the Wildlife Resources Section web site at www.wvdnr.gov.

Recent legislative efforts to remove WV DNR's regulatory authority over individuals possessing live deer in pens as well as attempts to legalize the sale of venison are a serious threat to our state's valuable wildlife resources and associated recreation. The principal threat of such legislation stems from the commerce of live animals that lack any federally approved biologics commonly used by domestic livestock for disease prevention and control. This gamble with animal health by the small elk and deer farming industry jeopardizes the hunting heritage of an estimated 11 million elk and deer hunters nationwide as well as the \$27.9 billion annual economic impact associated with deer hunting. In addition, these initiatives by agricultural interests go against the basic tenets that wildlife species are not to be privately owned commodities for commercial sale. These misguided attempts are a direct threat to the four principles that have made our state's and national wildlife management programs so successful, namely, public ownership of wildlife; elimination of markets in the meat, parts, and products of game mammals and birds; allocation of the material benefits of wildlife by law, not by the marketplace, birthright, land ownership, or social position; and prohibition of frivolous killing of wildlife.

Efforts to control the spread of chronic wasting disease CWD in free-ranging deer in Hampshire County by WV DNR, landowners and hunters are ongoing. In the 2006 deer seasons samples from 1,355 hunter-harvested deer brought to game checking stations in Hampshire County were tested for CWD. Only one sample was found to have the abnormal proteins associated with CWD. CWD has now been detected in a total of 10 deer in Hampshire County, one road-killed deer, four deer collected by the DNR in 2005, four deer collected by the DNR in 2006 and one hunter-harvested deer during the 2006 deer season. Over 2,000 samples collected by the DNR since 2002 from principally road-kill deer in the remainder of the state have not detected the abnormal protein of CWD in any county other than Hampshire.

For more information on CWD and the current status of the disease in Hampshire County West Virginia contact any DNR office or visit the Wildlife Resources web site www.wvdnr.gov.

Table 1. West Virginia antlered buck harvest, 2002-2006.

County	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Barbour	1,816	1,317	1,311	1,138	1,522
Brooke	537	543	538	477	480
Hancock	492	491	462	452	448
Harrison	2,340	1,651	1,650	1,494	1,810
Marion	1,826	1,346	1,446	1,119	1,443
Marshall	2,262	1,778	1,719	1,593	1,648
Monongalia	2,399	1,867	1,808	1,683	1,953
Ohio	786	675	527	473	507
Preston	3,658	2,561	2,041	2,254	2,611
Taylor	1,087	816	802	683	903
Tucker	1,617	932	626	733	832
Wetzel	2,706	2,068	1,952	1,672	1,926
Dist. I Subtotal	21,526	16,045	14,882	13,771	16,083
Berkeley	1,100	984	836	869	924
Grant	2,344	1,875	1,352	1,472	1,544
Hampshire	3,627	2,726	2,233	2,019	1,949
Hardy	3,193	2,565	2,117	1,961	2,178
Jefferson	616	630	685	651	713
Mineral	1,946	1,598	1,312	1,255	1,388
Morgan	1,109	861	680	802	845
Pendleton	2,517	1,808	1,443	1,484	1,850
Dist. II Subtotal	16,452	13,047	10,658	10,513	11,391
Braxton	2,749	1,796	1,539	1,244	1,309
Clay	816	660	472	370	400
Lewis	2,925	2,044	1,838	1,485	1,778
Nicholas	1,718	1,401	1,091	1,009	991
Pocahontas	2,638	1,570	1,057	1,167	1,410
Randolph	3,871	2,023	1,357	1,447	1,855
Upshur	2,327	1,461	1,312	1,164	1,432
Webster	1,669	1,024	800	753	797
Dist. III Subtotal	18,713	11,979	9,466	8,639	9,972
Fayette	1,532	1,087	812	728	874
Greenbrier	3,277	2,278	1,840	1,763	2,143
Mercer	837	611	509	451	662
Monroe	2,684	1,725	1,472	1,308	1,886
Raleigh	897	753	602	502	653
Summers	1,645	1,042	807	730	945
Dist. IV Subtotal	10,872	7,496	6,042	5,482	7,163
Boone	699	688	584	454	496
Cabell	875	809	773	577	683
Kanawha	1,523	1,336	1,077	877	1,025
Lincoln	1,343	1,005	944	596	832
Mason	2,295	2,286	2,295	2,146	2,067
Putnam	1,485	1,267	1,206	993	1,051
Wayne	1,031	995	875	627	837
Dist. V Subtotal	9,251	8,386	7,754	6,270	6,991
Calhoun	1,611	1,212	1,125	859	1,039
Doddridge	2,235	1,667	1,396	1,033	1,328
Gilmer	1,883	1,388	1,229	981	1,182
Jackson	2,402	2,178	2,289	2,074	2,122
Pleasants	688	580	574	452	589
Ritchie	3,056	2,275	2,000	1,495	2,147
Roane	2,624	2,020	1,909	1,616	1,691
Tyler	1,782	1,540	1,470	1,139	1,429
Wirt	1,475	1,299	1,234	928	919
Wood	1,985	2,016	1,845	1,649	1,877
Dist. VI Subtotal	19,741	16,175	15,071	12,226	14,323
State Total	96,555	73,128	63,873	56,901	65,923

Table 2. Antlerled buck gun harvest by locality in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

Area	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Monongahela NF	Beaver Dam	271	101	32	51	72
	Blackwater	294	172	117	204	139
	Cheat	305	117	91	111	133
	Cranberry	395	237	181	168	172
	Little River	610	39	178	255	304
	Neola	292	200	168	188	208
	Otter Creek	237	126	97	108	105
	Potomac	731	431	324	322	453
	Rimel	242	406	132	143	177
	Tea Creek	236	111	55	72	77
Monongahela NF Total		3,613	1,940	1,375	1,622	1,840
George Washington NF	Cove Creek	0	0	0	1	0
	Shenandoah	122	103	97	143	157
	Wardensville	418	312	279	272	291
	Wilson Cove	0	0	4	0	0
George Washington NF Total		540	415	380	416	448
Jefferson NF	Potts Creek	62	41	34	37	107
Jefferson NF Total		62	41	34	37	107
State Land	Allegheny	10	7	3	7	8
	Amherst/Plymouth	10	5	7	10	17
	Bear Rocks	4	11	3	3	7
	Becky Creek	4	4	0	0	0
	Beech Fork	27	16	25	22	7
	Beury Mtn	0	3	4	2	4
	Big Ditch	6	0	2	2	1
	Big Ugly	2	6	4	2	4
	Bluestone	123	51	41	65	16
	Briery Mnt	7	1	1	0	0
	Burches Run	1	0	0	0	0
	Burnsville	146	89	72	52	2
	Cabwaylingo Sf	9	5	2	2	6
	Calvin Price Sf	18	17	15	11	23
	Camp Creek Sf	23	7	15	14	21
	Castleman Run	10	3	11	6	14
	Center Branch	8	6	0	4	8
	Conaway Run	10	7	4	6	8
	Coopers Rock Sf	141	104	68	95	12
	Cornstalk	133	92	106	95	96
	Cotton Hill	0	1	0	0	0
	Cross Creek	21	21	31	19	20
	Dunkards Fork	1	2	1	0	3
	East Lynn	20	18	11	15	26
	Edwards Run	6	0	4	2	1
	Elk River	107	51	41	43	48
	Fork Creek	25	21	16	18	18
	Fort Mill Ridge	0	0	1	0	1
	Frozen Camp	16	15	2	28	24
	Green Bottom	2	1	0	1	1

Table 2. Continued.

Area	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
State Land	Greenbrier Sf	26	15	10	14	16
	Handley	9	11	2	3	1
	Hillcrest	13	15	10	0	0
	Hughes River	82	63	50	48	54
	Huttonsville	17	19	14	0	7
	Kanawha Sf	16	13	6	9	19
	Kumbrabow Sf	35	14	11	6	9
	Lewis Wetzel	158	131	92	70	80
	McClintic	12	9	14	20	6
	Meadow River	0	0	2	4	2
	Mill Creek	1	0	0	2	2
	Moncove	4	5	0	1	9
	Morris Creek	0	0	0	0	10
	Nathaniel Mnt	74	38	39	36	46
	New River Gorge	39	19	16	35	26
	Pedlar	0	0	0	2	5
	Pleasants Creek	6	5	6	8	16
	Plum Orchard	0	4	6	0	5
	Pruntytown	19	6	16	16	10
	Ritchie Mines	9	9	9	10	15
	Seneca Sf	55	35	26	41	36
	Shannondale	19	14	30	15	25
	Short Mnt	119	53	49	56	72
	Sleepy Creek	292	166	115	119	204
	Snake Hill	9	7	6	4	9
	South Branch	2	0	2	0	1
	Springfield	80	65	0	0	0
	Stonecoal	25	17	17	9	19
	Stonewall Jck	232	149	126	106	130
	Stumptown	4	0	0	2	5
	Summersville	34	29	20	13	17
	Sutton Res	14	2	0	1	8
	Tate Lohr	1	0	0	1	0
	The Jug	38	36	35	25	16
	Thorn Creek	0	0	0	1	1
	Underwood	22	20	18	0	0
	Underwood Wma	0	0	0	20	14
	Upper Mud River	3	1	7	3	3
	Valley Bend Wetl	1	0	0	0	0
	Wallback	2	0	2	8	6
	Widmyer	2	1	1	0	1
	Woodrum	0	0	0	1	0
State Land Total		2,364	1,535	1,247	1,233	1,301
Unknown		9	12	6	0	25
Private Land		89,967	69,185	60,831	53,593	62,202
State Total		96,555	73,128	63,873	56,901	65,923

Table 3. West Virginia white-tailed deer bow harvest, 2002-2006.

County	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Barbour	573	474	525	394	516
Brooke	462	355	357	315	322
Hancock	376	408	459	409	368
Harrison	716	554	527	507	503
Marion	582	482	521	430	494
Marshall	580	451	506	454	433
Monongalia	863	748	709	686	714
Ohio	398	334	273	257	258
Preston	1,674	1,279	1,075	1,012	1,228
Taylor	343	277	264	233	275
Tucker	836	540	428	355	475
Wetzel	496	401	431	318	358
Dist. I Subtotal	7,899	6,303	6,075	5,370	5,944
Berkeley	484	438	399	406	382
Grant	685	539	471	388	422
Hampshire	583	480	350	312	254
Hardy	794	642	457	394	418
Jefferson	352	363	353	380	358
Mineral	485	358	340	290	332
Morgan	280	253	163	149	180
Pendleton	594	440	371	315	438
Dist. II Subtotal	4,257	3,513	2,904	2,634	2,784
Braxton	892	604	546	396	420
Clay	426	344	278	212	228
Lewis	728	485	524	470	457
Nicholas	1,297	1,094	833	660	809
Pocahontas	825	485	353	284	393
Randolph	1,682	1,208	864	660	1,001
Upshur	804	637	571	476	536
Webster	1,059	724	604	399	493
Dist. III Subtotal	7,713	5,581	4,573	3,557	4,337
Fayette	1,119	911	616	464	655
Greenbrier	1,280	1,009	722	614	800
McDowell	506	763	692	480	642
Mercer	680	598	451	353	483
Monroe	876	619	505	451	558
Raleigh	816	666	537	467	638
Summers	847	536	411	411	492
Wyoming	383	605	493	377	611
Dist. IV Subtotal	6,507	5,707	4,427	3,617	4,879
Boone	480	383	294	215	275
Cabell	439	385	326	277	308
Kanawha	1,004	787	716	566	576
Lincoln	597	432	389	246	299
Logan	483	675	541	396	491
Mason	842	723	767	780	774
Mingo	291	354	292	177	273
Putnam	699	542	550	449	483
Wayne	422	406	348	267	298
Dist. V Subtotal	5,257	4,687	4,223	3,373	3,777
Calhoun	442	256	344	208	248
Doddridge	475	321	249	218	235
Gilmer	415	254	264	212	225
Jackson	782	588	677	630	559
Pleasants	132	99	102	91	113
Ritchie	725	510	479	430	477
Roane	843	551	541	433	440
Tyler	471	370	397	310	309
Wirt	489	367	341	273	291
Wood	737	683	631	593	601
Dist. VI Subtotal	5,511	3,999	4,025	3,398	3,498
State Total	37,144	29,790	26,227	21,949	25,219

Table 4. Deer bow harvest by locality in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

Area	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Monongahela NF	Potomac	256	144	127	124	124
	Little River	244	86	70	63	103
	Rimel	40	20	16	18	17
	Blackwater	155	96	80	96	70
	Beaver Dam	81	29	40	34	43
	Cheat	122	62	54	49	58
	Neola	88	47	28	14	30
	Cranberry	201	159	106	61	93
	Tea Creek	61	26	22	18	13
	Otter Creek	104	62	43	29	31
Monongahela NF Total		1,352	731	586	506	582
George Washington NF	Wardensville	101	67	48	58	48
	Shenandoah	51	31	24	25	33
	Cove Creek	1	0	0	0	0
	Wilson Cove	0	1	0	0	0
George Washington NF Total		153	99	72	83	81
Jefferson NF	Potts Creek	23	12	11	14	11
Jefferson NF Total		23	12	11	14	11
State Land	Stonewall Jck	96	57	63	64	41
	Mcclintic	26	14	23	26	14
	Sleepy Creek	54	35	21	31	28
	Springfield	12	7	0	0	0
	Elk River	58	28	18	20	30
	Greenbrier Sf	13	6	2	0	7
	Upper Mud River	1	0	0	1	5
	Cornstalk	45	15	29	35	51
	Amherst/plymouth	0	8	3	7	0
	Bluestone	158	58	55	87	64
	Lewis Wetzel	37	16	13	5	6
	Burnsville	56	22	30	30	20
	Beury Mtn	6	4	1	8	9
	Allegheny	2	0	1	1	5
	Handley	4	1	2	1	3
	The Jug	0	1	11	17	5
	Beech Fork	18	4	3	8	6
	Hughes River	5	10	6	22	14
	Green Bottom	2	4	1	4	2
	Ritchie Mines	0	3	2	2	1
	Big Ugly	2	0	1	2	0
	Nathaniel Mnt	2	4	2	2	1
	Coopers Rock Sf	54	39	33	31	8
	Edwards Run	0	0	1	2	0
	Seneca Sf	18	2	4	6	5
	Cabwaylingo Sf	1	1	2	0	3
	Short Mnt	12	9	9	6	7
	Pleasants Creek	9	8	3	7	6
	Frozen Camp	3	0	13	2	5
	Shannondale	26	24	28	21	14
	Stonecoal	5	2	0	5	4
	Widmyer	0	0	0	0	1

Table 4. Continued.

Area	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
State Land	Calvin Price Sf	7	1	0	2	2
	New River Gorge	5	1	17	12	18
	Huttonsville	7	5	4	2	0
	Kumbrabow Sf	24	12	6	3	4
	Pruntytown	4	3	3	4	2
	East Lynn	9	9	2	3	3
	Moncove	0	3	0	1	2
	Conaway Run	1	0	2	0	3
	Hillcrest	33	37	39	22	19
	Snake Hill	7	5	8	3	6
	Underwood Wma	0	0	0	4	3
	Berwind	32	50	10	9	23
	Castleman Run	0	4	4	1	1
	Teter Creek	1	0	0	0	0
	Fork Creek	10	19	5	3	2
	Tate Lohr	3	0	0	0	1
	Laurel Lake	3	20	19	5	4
	Summersville	19	26	15	9	13
	Camp Creek Sf	24	1	6	3	4
	R D Bailey	49	94	42	54	91
	Kanawha Sf	0	11	6	5	5
	Bear Rocks	1	0	3	0	3
	Meadow River	0	0	0	2	5
	Panther Sf	15	17	8	11	16
	Horse Crk	4	5	1	1	3
	Wallback	5	2	0	6	12
	Briery Mnt	1	1	0	0	1
	Big Ditch	2	3	0	0	0
	Stumptown	0	0	0	2	0
	Becky Creek	2	2	0	2	0
	Fort Mill Ridge	0	1	0	0	0
	Woodrum	0	0	0	1	0
	Plum Orchard	3	1	0	8	2
	Burches Run	0	0	0	1	0
	Center Branch	2	4	1	3	4
	Cross Creek	10	8	9	7	3
	Tug Fork	9	2	0	0	14
	Sutton Res	0	1	1	7	1
	South Branch	1	0	0	1	0
	Anawalt	2	0	1	1	1
	Dunkards Fork	0	0	1	0	0
	Underwood	6	5	0	0	0
	Pedlar	0	0	0	1	2
	Morris Creek	0	0	0	1	3
	Lantz Farm	0	0	0	1	0
State Land Total		1,026	735	593	654	641
Unknown		175	1	6	0	18
Private Land		34,415	28,212	24,959	20,692	23,886
State Total		37,144	29,790	26,227	21,949	25,219

Table 5. West Virginia antlerless gun harvest, 2002-2006.

County	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Barbour	2,506	1,914	1,693	1,025	1,130
Brooke	971	748	699	764	619
Hancock	800	728	653	675	544
Harrison	3,084	2,182	2,098	1,858	2,056
Marion	2,224	1,716	1,731	1,367	1,464
Marshall	2,519	2,045	1,658	1,794	1,542
Monongalia	2,698	2,337	2,138	2,063	1,828
Ohio	1,011	803	625	724	605
Preston	5,113	4,192	2,825	1,820	1,957
Taylor	1,408	1,188	959	763	933
Tucker	595	773	562	0	0
Wetzel	3,137	2,497	2,323	1,734	1,680
Dist. I Subtotal	26,066	21,123	17,964	14,587	14,358
Berkeley	874	1,019	790	815	651
Grant	2,408	1,961	1,458	846	565
Hampshire	3,554	2,908	2,265	1,651	1,369
Hardy	3,193	2,565	2,221	1,610	1,514
Jefferson	570	696	601	619	568
Mineral	2,140	1,644	1,312	1,277	1,214
Morgan	1,181	1,045	772	738	598
Pendleton	2,017	1,567	1,223	198	303
Dist. II Subtotal	15,937	13,405	10,642	7,754	6,782
Braxton	3,311	3,033	2,604	421	0
Clay	154	231	190	0	0
Lewis	3,945	2,908	2,555	2,371	1,661
Nicholas	4	915	543	0	0
Pocahontas	2,047	1,459	874	0	0
Randolph	2,435	2,261	1,494	0	0
Upshur	3,725	2,696	2,107	1,197	638
Webster	708	1,372	344	0	0
Dist. III Subtotal	16,329	14,875	10,711	3,989	2,299
Fayette	723	1,204	922	0	0
Greenbrier	1,953	3,514	2,455	489	0
Mercer	312	572	650	0	0
Monroe	3,652	2,641	1,973	1,071	521
Raleigh	310	886	617	0	1
Summers	2,506	1,647	1,029	276	109
Dist. IV Subtotal	9,456	10,464	7,646	1,836	631
Boone	0	316	269	0	0
Cabell	1,012	823	809	502	198
Kanawha	1,421	1,565	758	210	216
Lincoln	1,769	1,374	1,038	141	0
Mason	2,937	2,545	2,506	2,719	2,262
Putnam	1,894	1,526	1,403	1,146	740
Wayne	593	867	823	132	155
Dist. V Subtotal	9,626	9,016	7,606	4,850	3,571
Calhoun	2,152	1,360	1,369	780	735
Doddridge	2,585	1,876	1,895	1,237	912
Gilmer	2,636	1,692	1,620	895	360
Jackson	3,400	2,636	2,599	2,534	2,260
Pleasants	867	628	635	547	585
Ritchie	3,830	2,953	2,539	2,086	1,466
Roane	3,880	2,794	2,568	1,885	656
Tyler	2,290	1,953	1,942	1,372	1,460
Wirt	2,357	1,901	1,807	941	1,265
Wood	2,788	2,389	2,319	2,154	2,020
Dist. VI Subtotal	26,785	20,182	19,293	14,431	11,719
State Total	104,199	89,065	73,862	47,447	39,360

Table 6. Antlerless deer harvest by locality in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

Area	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Monongahela NF	Beaver Dam	69	19	14	0	0
	Blackwater	75	67	56	12	10
	Cheat	78	27	27	0	0
	Cranberry	61	79	32	1	0
	Little River	62	45	23	0	0
	Neola	64	27	24	0	0
	Otter Creek	85	42	35	0	0
	Potomac	215	97	69	28	35
	Rimel	31	25	7	0	0
	Tea Creek	27	19	11	0	0
Monongahela NF Total		767	447	298	41	45
George Washington NF	Shenandoah	55	23	13	2	3
	Wardensville	101	86	58	82	44
George Washington NF Total		156	109	71	84	47
Jefferson NF	Potts Creek	76	50	24	14	2
Jefferson NF Total		76	50	24	14	2
State Land	Allegheny	3	0	3	2	2
	Amherst/Plymouth	2	2	5	3	0
	Bear Rocks	0	3	2	0	1
	Becky Creek	2	2	0	0	0
	Beech Fork	7	13	15	11	4
	Beury Mtn	3	5	7	0	0
	Big Ditch	0	2	1	0	0
	Big Ugly	4	1	0	1	0
	Blennerhassett	86	0	0	0	0
	Bluestone	155	24	54	36	110
	Briery Mnt	1	1	2	1	0
	Burnsville	98	44	61	0	0
	Cabwaylingo Sf	0	1	0	0	0
	Calvin Price Sf	2	0	0	0	0
	Camp Creek Sf	0	1	2	0	0
	Castleman Run	3	2	4	12	4
	Center Branch	3	6	1	2	9
	Conaway Run	4	2	3	4	7
	Coopers Rock Sf	32	58	37	46	30
	Cornstalk	29	31	31	27	51
	Cross Creek	6	4	9	7	8
	East Lynn	5	3	4	1	1
	Edwards Run	4	8	1	2	0
	Elk Fork	0	0	0	2	2
	Elk River	48	19	18	0	0
	Fork Creek	0	35	9	0	0
	Fort Mill Ridge	0	0	1	1	0
	Frozen Camp	22	10	15	22	38
	Green Bottom	2	2	3	1	0
	Greenbrier Sf	4	14	7	0	0
	Handley	8	1	2	0	0
	Hilbert	1	0	0	0	0
	Hillcrest	8	10	11	17	10
	Hughes River	189	74	93	78	32

Table 6. Continued.

Area	Locality	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
State Land	Huttonsville	15	5	7	0	0
	Kanawha Sf	0	1	0	0	0
	Kumbrabow Sf	14	6	2	0	0
	Lewis Wetzel	135	138	100	81	17
	McClintic	96	68	77	123	31
	Meadow River	5	4	1	4	0
	Mill Creek	1	1	0	1	0
	Moncove	6	3	0	0	1
	Nathaniel Mnt	1	6	3	5	5
	New River Gorge	3	2	1	0	0
	Pleasants Creek	1	4	6	12	11
	Plum Orchard	0	2	0	0	0
	Pruntytown	3	16	6	10	7
	Ritchie Mines	9	1	3	5	7
	Seneca Sf	12	0	1	0	0
	Shannondale	4	18	6	2	13
	Short Mnt	16	22	12	14	33
	Sleepy Creek	53	69	25	41	38
	Snake Hill	0	4	1	1	3
	South Branch	0	0	0	2	2
	Springfield	85	104	0	0	0
	Stonecoal	13	6	16	15	16
	Stonewall Jck	193	106	112	135	140
	Stumptown	10	0	2	10	3
	Summersville	0	9	0	0	0
	Sutton Res	3	4	2	1	5
	Tate Lohr	0	1	0	0	0
	Teter Creek	2	0	3	0	1
	The Jug	27	13	10	12	14
	Underwood Wma	0	0	0	1	16
	Upper Mud River	12	2	5	0	0
	Widmyer	0	1	0	0	0
	Woodrum	0	0	0	0	1
	Underwood	2	0	1	0	0
	Pedlar	0	0	0	3	4
	Andrew Rowan	0	0	0	1	0
State Land Total		1,452	994	803	755	677
Private Land		101,741	87,460	72,661	46,553	38,574
Unknown		7	5	5	0	15
State Total		104,199	89,065	73,862	47,447	39,360

Table 7. Muzzleloader deer seasons in West Virginia, 2002-2006.

County	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Barbour	263	308	333	201	221
Brooke	57	126	122	93	63
Hancock	110	210	149	166	92
Harrison	372	402	395	286	216
Marion	242	286	308	197	143
Marshall	321	402	277	362	179
Monongalia	345	433	415	324	251
Ohio	114	144	117	123	74
Preston	617	516	512	354	330
Taylor	189	231	175	136	107
Tucker	244	257	269	23	25
Wetzel	442	460	524	248	204
Dist. I Subtotal	3,316	3,775	3,596	2,513	1,905
Berkeley	140	166	143	162	107
Grant	514	392	352	209	219
Hampshire	425	399	348	266	129
Hardy	498	430	367	262	228
Jefferson	102	89	131	97	91
Mineral	248	188	162	190	121
Morgan	174	138	109	95	83
Pendleton	332	268	232	163	192
Dist. II Subtotal	2,433	2,070	1,844	1,444	1,170
Braxton	990	549	567	463	39
Clay	47	59	94	12	4
Lewis	528	510	497	412	390
Nicholas	25	513	572	37	34
Pocahontas	632	324	243	34	44
Randolph	1,081	600	545	34	39
Upshur	385	326	338	221	257
Webster	277	328	361	13	15
Dist. III Subtotal	3,965	3,209	3,217	1,226	822
Fayette	637	320	319	20	25
Greenbrier	1,080	634	534	335	76
Mercer	220	167	147	21	25
Monroe	487	335	273	211	289
Raleigh	213	202	141	19	22
Summers	455	303	212	196	36
Dist. IV Subtotal	3,092	1,961	1,626	802	473
Boone	20	179	130	15	9
Cabell	132	148	148	104	82
Kanawha	221	286	179	133	90
Lincoln	221	215	176	98	21
Mason	340	475	454	477	288
Putnam	185	257	202	192	112
Wayne	230	239	164	72	66
Dist. V Subtotal	1,349	1,799	1,453	1,091	668
Calhoun	259	198	243	109	144
Doddridge	302	327	333	163	158
Gilmer	309	324	270	167	211
Jackson	423	429	439	344	279
Pleasants	123	116	102	69	64
Ritchie	529	516	476	243	268
Roane	397	318	404	211	186
Tyler	343	383	385	203	158
Wirt	300	359	291	186	154
Wood	318	488	425	293	230
Dist. VI Subtotal	3,303	3,458	3,368	1,988	1,852
State Total	17,458	16,272	15,104	9,064	6,890

Table 8. Deer mortality by type of season, 2006.

County	Buck Gun	Antlerless	Bow	Muzzleloader	Total
Barbour	1,522	1,130	516	221	3,389
Brooke	480	619	322	63	1,484
Hancock	448	544	368	92	1,452
Harrison	1,810	2,056	503	216	4,585
Marion	1,443	1,464	494	143	3,544
Marshall	1,648	1,542	433	179	3,802
Monongalia	1,953	1,828	714	251	4,746
Ohio	507	605	258	74	1,444
Preston	2,611	1,957	1,228	330	6,126
Taylor	903	933	275	107	2,218
Tucker	832	0	475	25	1,332
Wetzel	1,926	1,680	358	204	4,168
Dist. I Subtotal	16,083	14,358	5,944	1,905	38,290
Berkeley	924	651	382	107	2,064
Grant	1,544	565	422	219	2,750
Hampshire	1,949	1,369	254	129	3,701
Hardy	2,178	1,514	418	228	4,338
Jefferson	713	568	358	91	1,730
Mineral	1,388	1,214	332	121	3,055
Morgan	845	598	180	83	1,706
Pendleton	1,850	303	438	192	2,783
Dist. II Subtotal	11,391	6,782	2,784	1,170	22,127
Braxton	1,309	0	420	39	1,768
Clay	400	0	228	4	632
Lewis	1,778	1,661	457	390	4,286
Nicholas	991	0	809	34	1,834
Pocahontas	1,410	0	393	44	1,847
Randolph	1,855	0	1,001	39	2,895
Upshur	1,432	638	536	257	2,863
Webster	797	0	493	15	1,305
Dist. III Subtotal	9,972	2,299	4,337	822	17,430
Fayette	874	0	655	25	1,554
Greenbrier	2,143	0	800	76	3,019
McDowell	0	0	642	0	642
Mercer	662	0	483	25	1,170
Monroe	1,886	521	558	289	3,254
Raleigh	653	1	638	22	1,314
Summers	945	109	492	36	1,582
Wyoming	0	0	611	0	611
Dist. IV Subtotal	7,163	631	4,879	473	13,146
Boone	496	0	275	9	780
Cabell	683	198	308	82	1,271
Kanawha	1,025	216	576	90	1,907
Lincoln	832	0	299	21	1,152
Logan	0	0	491	0	491
Mason	2,067	2,262	774	288	5,391
Mingo	0	0	273	0	273
Putnam	1,051	740	483	112	2,386
Wayne	837	155	298	66	1,356
Dist. V Subtotal	6,991	3,571	3,777	668	15,007
Calhoun	1,039	735	248	144	2,166
Doddridge	1,328	912	235	158	2,633
Gilmer	1,182	360	225	211	1,978
Jackson	2,122	2,260	559	279	5,220
Pleasants	589	585	113	64	1,351
Ritchie	2,147	1,466	477	268	4,358
Roane	1,691	656	440	186	2,973
Tyler	1,429	1,460	309	158	3,356
Wirt	919	1,265	291	154	2,629
Wood	1,877	2,020	601	230	4,728
Dist. VI Subtotal	14,323	11,719	3,498	1,852	31,392
State Total	65,923	39,360	25,219	6,890	137,392

Table 9. West Virginia 2006 deer kill per square mile of habitat by season (calculated using deer habitat open by county for season, all seasons kill based on total deer harvest).

County	Area	Buck	Antlerless	Muzzleloader	Bow	Total
Barbour	324	4.70	3.49	0.68	1.59	10.46
Brooke	76	6.32	8.14	0.83	4.24	19.53
Hancock	61	7.34	8.92	1.51	6.03	23.80
Harrison	390	4.64	5.27	0.55	1.29	11.76
Marion	273	5.29	5.36	0.52	1.81	12.98
Marshall	270	6.10	5.71	0.66	1.60	14.08
Monongalia	312	6.26	5.86	0.80	2.29	15.21
Ohio	83	6.11	7.29	0.89	3.11	17.40
Preston	612	4.27	3.20	0.54	2.01	10.01
Taylor	157	5.75	5.94	0.68	1.75	14.13
Tucker	412	2.02	0.00	0.06	1.15	3.23
Wetzel	353	5.46	4.76	0.58	1.01	11.81
Dist. I Subtotal	3,323	4.84	4.32	0.57	1.79	11.52
Berkeley	294	3.14	2.21	0.36	1.30	7.02
Grant	474	3.26	1.19	0.46	0.89	5.80
Hampshire	621	3.14	2.20	0.21	0.41	5.96
Hardy	567	3.84	2.67	0.40	0.74	7.65
Jefferson	192	3.71	2.96	0.47	1.86	9.01
Mineral	318	4.36	3.82	0.38	1.04	9.61
Morgan	222	3.81	2.69	0.37	0.81	7.68
Pendleton	689	2.69	0.44	0.28	0.64	4.04
Dist. II Subtotal	3,377	3.37	2.01	0.35	0.82	6.55
Braxton	499	2.62	0.00	0.08	0.84	3.54
Clay	336	1.19	0.00	0.01	0.68	1.88
Lewis	381	4.67	4.36	1.02	1.20	11.25
Nicholas	616	1.61	0.00	0.06	1.31	2.98
Pocahontas	930	1.52	0.00	0.05	0.42	1.99
Randolph	1,015	1.83	0.00	0.04	0.99	2.85
Upshur	340	4.21	1.88	0.76	1.58	8.42
Webster	544	1.47	0.00	0.03	0.91	2.40
Dist. III Subtotal	4,661	2.14	0.49	0.18	0.93	3.74
Fayette	594	1.47	0.00	0.04	1.10	2.62
Greenbrier	986	2.17	0.00	0.08	0.81	3.06
McDowell	486	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.32	1.32
Mercer	367	1.80	0.00	0.07	1.32	3.19
Monroe	466	4.05	1.12	0.62	1.20	6.98
Raleigh	548	1.19	0.00	0.04	1.16	2.40
Summers	344	2.75	0.32	0.10	1.43	4.60
Wyoming	495	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.23	1.23
Dist. IV Subtotal	4,286	4.67	0.15	0.11	1.14	3.07
Bonne	490	1.01	0.00	0.02	0.56	1.59
Cabell	247	2.77	0.80	0.33	1.25	5.15
Kanawha	804	1.27	0.27	0.11	0.72	2.37
Lincoln	424	1.96	0.00	0.05	0.71	2.72
Logan	444	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.11	1.11
Mason	407	5.08	5.56	0.71	1.90	13.25
Mingo	403	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.68	0.68
Putnam	331	3.18	2.24	0.34	1.46	7.21
Wayne	499	1.68	0.31	0.13	0.60	2.72
Dist. V. Subtotal	4,049	1.73	0.88	0.16	0.93	3.71
Calhoun	277	3.75	2.65	0.52	0.90	7.82
Doddridge	310	4.28	2.94	0.51	0.76	8.49
Gilmer	333	3.55	1.08	0.63	0.68	5.94
Jackson	452	4.69	5.00	0.62	1.24	11.55
Pleasants	119	4.95	4.92	0.54	0.95	11.35
Ritchie	439	4.89	3.34	0.61	1.09	9.93
Roane	476	3.55	1.38	0.39	0.92	6.25
Tyler	246	5.81	5.93	0.64	1.26	13.64
Wirt	232	3.96	5.45	0.66	1.25	11.33
Wood	309	6.07	6.54	0.74	1.94	15.30
Dist. VI Subtotal	3,193	4.49	3.67	0.58	1.10	9.83
State Total	22,889	2.88	1.72	0.30	1.10	6.00

BIG BUCK CONTEST

**by
Eugene R. Thorn**

The West Virginia Big Buck Contest was established in 1964 to recognize sportsmen who bag extraordinarily big antlered bucks. The contest is co-sponsored by the Division of Natural Resources, the Izaak Walton League of West Virginia, and the West Virginia Bowhunter's Association.

The Boone & Crockett or Pope & Young Club scoring systems are used to score bucks depending upon method of kill. Guidelines for the annual contest are as follows:

1. The deer must have been checked at an Official Game Checking Station, and the official West Virginia Game Check Tag must be attached to the antlers.
2. A Fair Chase Affidavit must be signed and attached to the Official Score Sheet.
3. Field photos of the freshly killed deer with antlers attached must be submitted at the time of scoring for state record entries.
4. Eligible bucks are any bow-killed buck that scores at least 125 typical or 155 non-typical and gun-killed bucks that score at least 140 typical or 165 non-typical. All entrees must be scored by an Official Scorer approved by the Pope and Young or Boone and Crockett Club.

A review committee was established, by the Director of the Division of Natural Resources, to consider all deer entries to the Big Buck Contest. The committee has the power to make judgements as to the legitimacy of each entry and to accept or reject any entry in question. The West Virginia Big Buck Contest Review Committee consists of representatives from the Izaak Walton League of West Virginia, the West Virginia Bowhunter's Association, the DNR's Wildlife Resources Section and Law Enforcement Section, and a citizen member with an interest in deer hunting.

In 2006, 227 hunters had their deer antlers scored at one of the six DNR District Offices, Field Offices, or the West Virginia Hunting and Fishing Show in Charleston (sponsored by the West Virginia Trophy Hunter's Association). There are 14 DNR Wildlife Biologists and Wildlife Managers distributed throughout the state that are certified by the Boone & Crockett and Pope & Young Clubs as official scorers. In the 2006 Big Buck Contest hunters took 62 big bucks (Table 1) with gun or bow that met the score minimums and the requirements concerning Game Check Tags and Fair Chase Statements. An additional 25 bucks from former years were scored that met the requirements for a Big Buck Certificate.

It is noteworthy that an additional 11 score-sheets that met the minimum score requirements did not have the Game Check Tag verified, or did not have a signed Fair Chase Statement attached. These are the common reasons why hunter's bucks are excluded from the

contest list and do not receive a Big Buck Certificate. A good practice is to staple the Game Check Tag to the back of a mounted head so that it is not misplaced. A hunter may only take their rack to be scored by one Official Scorer. Score shopping is prohibited by the WV Big Buck Contest and will be dealt with according to Boone & Crockett and Pope & Young guidelines. It is the hunter's responsibility to work with their official scorer to make sure that all documentation is completed (by the contest deadline of January 31) and sent to the Big Buck Contest Review Committee Chairman.

Eleven bucks killed by gun hunters scored above 140 points typical or 165 points non-typical. In the Typical-Gun category, the winner was Zack Winters from Lesage, WV with a 10-point buck killed in Cabell County that scored 156 2/8. There was no non-typical buck harvested with the gun that met the minimum score; therefore, the Non-Typical Gun category has no winner this year.

Bowhunters killed 51 deer that scored above 125 points typical or 155 points non-typical. The winner of the Typical-Bow category was David Allen of Flat Top, WV with a 12-point buck from McDowell County that scored 170 1/8. The Non-Typical Bow category winner was Robert Cooper of Pineville, WV with a huge 16-point buck killed in Wyoming County that scored 201 4/8. Robert's buck took over the #2 position for Non-Typical Bow kills in the list that ranks the top five buck scores in each category for all time in West Virginia. The updated all time West Virginia Big Buck Rankings are shown in Table 2.

The 2006 West Virginia Big Buck Contest had slightly less deer brought in to be scored than last year. However, the number of bucks killed in 2006 that qualified for Big Buck Citations was up from last year. The Big Buck Contest Committee would like to congratulate all the hunters who took bucks that qualified for this year's contest. We would like to give some special recognition and a big congratulations to one of our next generation of deer hunters, Samantha Hornish, a 10-year old young lady from Cairo, WV who took a 13-point buck in Ritchie County that scored 144 7/8. Way to go Samantha! Thank you to all hunters who participated and had antlers scored this past year!

WANTED: OWNERS OF WEST VIRGINIA BIG BUCKS

The West Virginia Wildlife Federation and the Division of Natural Resources are seeking hunters who own trophy white-tailed bucks that were legally taken in West Virginia with either bow or gun and have a Pope & Young or Boone & Crockett score of 150 or greater. The purpose of this search is to establish a West Virginia Big Buck display at West Virginia's Celebration of National Hunting and Fishing Day, September 22-23, 2007 at Stonewall Jackson Lake Resort near Weston in Lewis County. Participation will be limited to the first 30 qualifying trophy entries received. As an incentive for participation, hunters who display their trophy deer at the two-day event will be entered into an exclusive drawing for several valuable prizes.

Interested hunters who have qualifying head or antler mounts should contact Keith Krantz at (304)637-0245 for additional information or a registration form. Interested individuals can also look under Special Opportunities, National Hunting & Fishing Days at www.wvdnr.gov.

Table 1. West Virginia Big Buck Contest, 2006 (duplicate scores listed first by harvest date then alphabetically by hunter's last name).

Name	County of Kill	Harvest Date	Rank	Score
<u>Typical – Gun</u>				
Zack Winters	Cabell	11/23/06	1	156 2/8
Heath Folks	Monroe	11/20/06	2	153 1/8
Jonathan Shrewsbury	Raleigh	11/25/06	3	150 0/8
Jack Lucy	Marshall	11/20/06	4	149 6/8
Timothy Day II	Raleigh	11/23/06	5	148 5/8
Henry Mullins	Calhoun	11/20/06	6	148 4/8
Samantha Hornish	Ritchie	11/20/06	7	144 7/8
Joseph Rash	Mercer	11/27/06	8	144 4/8
Mike Arcuri	Pocahontas	11/22/06	9	144 3/8
Mark Coffman	Nicholas	11/30/06	10	141 3/8
Jason Tabor	Mercer	11/21/06	11	141 2/8
<u>Typical – Bow</u>				
David Allen	McDowell	11/4/06	1	170 1/8
James Embrey	Kanawha	11/10/06	2	164 2/8
Gregory Williams	Raleigh	11/17/06	3	162 4/8
William Worley	Raleigh	10/30/06	4	162 1/8
Ricky Carter	Wyoming	11/9/06	5	161 6/8
Randy McCoy	McDowell	12/14/06	6	160 2/8
Matthew Cline	Mingo	11/18/06	7	159 5/8
Jack Lambert	Wyoming	11/18/06	8	158 1/8
George Green	Logan	11/25/06	9	156 6/8
Eveline Pertee	McDowell	12/20/06	10	156 1/8
Ty Travis	Wyoming	10/14/06	11	154 5/8
David Roberts	Logan	12/9/06	12	151 6/8
Garland Burchette	Wyoming	11/6/06	13	150 0/8
James Miller	Wyoming	10/15/06	14	147 2/8
Justin Warren	McDowell	11/18/06	15	146 6/8
Terry Laxton	Wyoming	10/21/06	16	146 4/8
Jason Gautier	Wyoming	11/4/06	17	145 5/8
Dustin Farmer	McDowell	11/11/06	18	144 2/8
Larry Howerton	McDowell	12/2/06	19	143 7/8
Scott Roush, Jr.	Mason	12/28/06	20	138 7/8
Roger Maynard	Mingo	11/24/06	21	137 6/8
Kenneth Clay	Wyoming	11/10/06	22	136 5/8
Warrick Smith, Jr.	Fayette	11/11/06	23	136 4/8

Table 1. Continued.

Name	County of Kill	Harvest Date	Rank	Score
<u>Typical – Bow Continued</u>				
Andre Palmateer	McDowell	11/23/06	24	135 7/8
Mack Birchfield	McDowell	11/7/06	25	135 5/8
Douglas Gillespie	McDowell	11/26/06	26	133 5/8
Jerry Jordan	Mason	11/4/06	27	133 4/8
Johnny Blankenship	McDowell	11/13/06	28	132 7/8
Homer Lester	McDowell	11/21/06	29	132 6/8
Daniel Bishop	Mercer	11/9/06	30	132 2/8
David Butcher	Marion	11/13/06	30	132 2/8
Ronald Graham	McDowell	11/3/06	32	132 0/8
George Ray	Wyoming	11/23/06	32	132 0/8
Larry Finney	Wyoming	11/11/06	34	131 7/8
Gene Muncy	McDowell	12/2/06	35	131 6/8
Chester Mullins	McDowell	11/24/06	36	130 0/8
John Morris	Kanawha	11/1/06	37	128 6/8
Toby Sommerville	Wirt	11/7/06	38	128 4/8
Jimmy Davis	Wyoming	11/25/06	39	128 3/8
Keith Adkins	Logan	11/18/06	40	127 1/8
H. Tracy Butcher, Jr.	Logan	11/11/06	41	127 0/8
Robert Siders	Putnam	10/16/06	42	126 5/8
John Simeral	Lincoln	10/21/06	43	126 3/8
Kevin Green	Wyoming	11/6/06	43	126 3/8
Chris Roberts	Logan	11/4/06	45	125 5/8
Nicholas Colucci	Wyoming	11/8/06	46	125 4/8
<u>Non-Typical Bow</u>				
Robert Cooper	Wyoming	11/21/06	1	201 4/8
Nathan Killen	McDowell	11/3/06	2	175 6/8
Justin Sizemore	Wyoming	11/18/06	3	158 7/8
Joseph Jones	McDowell	12/14/06	4	157 7/8
Jeffrey Karr, Jr.	Mason	10/18/06	5	155 3/8

Table 2. West Virginia Big Buck Rankings, as of January 31, 2007.

Name	County of Kill	Harvest Year	Rank	Score
<u>Typical – Gun</u>				
Junior Bailes	Nicholas	1994	1	185 4/8
William Given	Braxton	1976	2	182 3/8
Joseph Volitis	Randolph	1969	3	180 5/8
Thomas Nickholson	Lewis	1977	4	180 3/8
Wiley Dorsey	Calhoun	1991	5	179 7/8
<u>Non-Typical – Gun</u>				
Charles McLaughlin	Wayne	1997	1	231 5/8
Jess Kelly	Fayette	2002	2	220 0/8
James Pauley	Mason	1966	3	207 7/8
Jimmy Osborne	Boone	1965	4	207 0/8
Ed Bailey	Ritchie	1979	5	205 6/8
<u>Typical – Bow</u>				
Mark Lester	Logan	1998	1	175 6/8
Ronnie McCoy	McDowell	1999	2	174 6/8
Austin Brown	Fayette	1998	3	173 5/8
Terry McGrady	Logan	1997	4	171 3/8
Billy Bishop	Mercer	1999	5	170 7/8
Curtis Blankenship	Wyoming	2003	5	170 7/8
<u>Non-Typical Bow</u>				
Jerry Hill	Wyoming	1986	1	212 1/8
Robert Cooper	Wyoming	2006	2	201 4/8
Paul Sattler	Clay	1989	3	197 5/8
Dennis Hall	Mingo	2003	4	192 6/8
Charles O’Conner	Boone	1964	5	191 2/8
Christopher Clark	Wyoming	2003	5	191 2/8

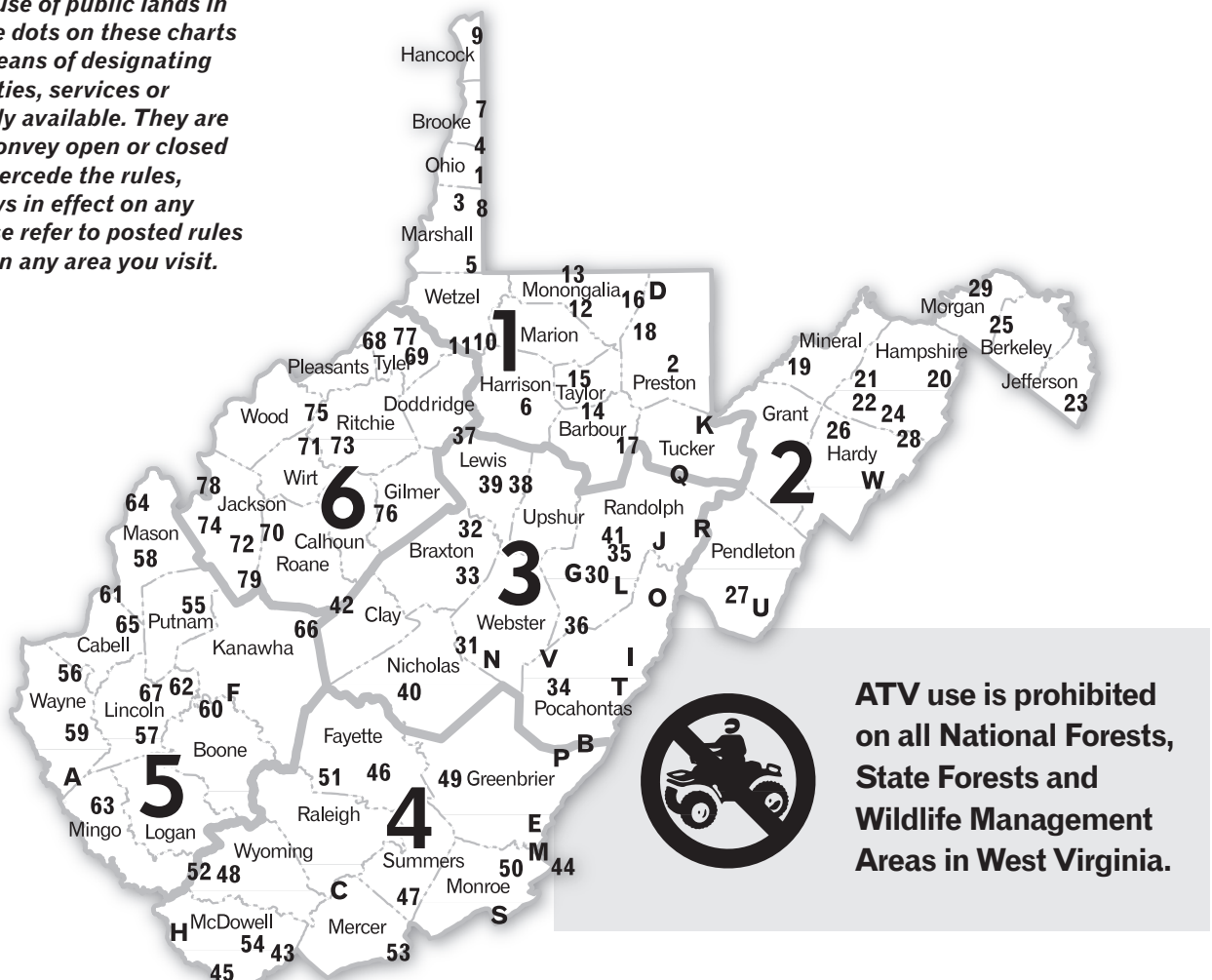
Public Lands - Wildlife Management Areas

District	WMA	Acres	Class Q Access	Big Game	Small Game	Fishing Lake	Stream	Boating	Camping Tent	Trailer	Ownership
1	WVDNR (304) 825-6787 P.O. Box 99 Farmington, WV 26571-0099	1. Bear Rocks Lakes	242	•	•	•	•	•			WVDNR
		2. Briery Mountain	1,162	•	•						WV Armory
		3. Burches Run	55	•	•						WVDNR
		4. Castlemans Run Lake	486	•	•	•		•			WVDNR
		5. Cecil H. Underwood	2,215	•	•		•				WVDNR
		6. Center Branch	975	•	•						WVDNR
		7. Cross Creek	2,078	•	•		•				WVDNR
		8. Dunkard Fork	470	•	•	•		•			WCWC
		9. Hillcrest	2,212	•	•	•					WVDNR
		10. Lantz Farm & Nature Preserve	555	•	•	•	•				WJU
		11. Lewis Wetzel	13,590	•	•	•			•	•	WVDNR
		11. Little Indian Creek	1,036	•	•	•					WVDNR
		13. Pedlar	766	•	•	•		•			WVDNR
		14. Pleasant Creek	3,030	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	WVDNR/COE
		15. Pruntytown State Farm	1,764	•	•						WVDOA
		16. Snake Hill	3,092	•	•						WVDNR
		17. Teter Creek Lake	137	•	•	•		•	•	•	WVDNR
		18. Upper Deckers Creek	56		•	•					WVDNR
2	WVDNR (304) 822-3551 1 Depot Street Romney, WV 26757	19. Allegheny	6,202		•	•		•			WVDNR
		20. Edwards Run	397		•	•	•	•			WVDNR
		21. Fort Mill Ridge	217		•	•		•			WVDNR
		22. Nathaniel Mountain	10,675		•	•			•	•	WVDNR
		23. Shannondale Springs	1,361		•	•		•			WVDNR
		24. Short Mountain	8,005		•	•		•	•	•	WVDNR
		25. Sleepy Creek	22,928	•	•	•		•	•	•	WVDNR
		26. South Branch	1,092		•	•		•			WVDNR
		27. Thorn Creek	528		•	•		•			WVDNR
		28. Warden Lake	110			•					WVDNR
		29. Widmeyer	422		•	•					WVDNR
3	WVDNR (304) 924-6211 Box 38 French Creek, WV 26218	30. Becky Creek	1,930		•	•			•		WVDOA
		31. Big Ditch	388	•	•	•		•			WVDNR
		32. Burnsville Lake	12,579	•	•	•		•	•	•	COE
		33. Elk River	18,225	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	WVDNR/COE
		34. Handley	784	•	•	•		•	•		WVDNR
		35. Huttonsville	2,720		•	•		•			WVDOA
		36. Slatyfork	49		•	•		•			WVDNR
		37. Smoke Camp	252		•	•					WVDNR
		38. Stonecoal Lake	2,985	•	•	•		•			AEC
		39. Stonewall Jackson Lake	18,289	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	COE
		40. Summersville Lake	5,974	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	COE
		41. Valley Bend	31		•	•					WVDNR
		42. Wallback	11,758	•	•	•		•			WVDNR
		43. Anawalt	1,792		•	•		•			WVDNR
4	WVDNR (304) 256-6947 2006 Robert C. Byrd Drive Beckley, WV 25801-8320	44. Andrew Rowan Farm	650		•	•					WVDOA
		45. Berwind Lake	85			•			•		WVDNR
		46. Beury Mountain	3,061		•	•					WVDNR
		47. Bluestone Lake	18,019	•	•	•		•	•	•	COE
		48. Horse Creek Lake	47,91		•	•					Heartwood FF
		49. Meadow River	2,385		•	•					WVDNR/DOH
		50. Moncove Lake	775		•	•		•	•	•	WVDNR
		51. Plum Orchard Lake	3,201		•	•		•	•	•	WVDNR
		52. R.D. Bailey Lake	17,280		•	•	•	•			COE
		53. Tate Lohr	500		•	•					WVDNR
		54. Tug Fork	2,165		•	•		•			WVDNR
		55. Amherst/Plymouth	7,061		•	•		•			Amherst Ind.
		56. Beech Fork Lake	7,531		•	•	•	•	•	•	WVDNR/COE
		57. Big Ugly	6,000		•	•					WVDNR
5	WVDNR (304) 675-0871 Route 1, Box 484 Pt. Pleasant, WV 25550	58. Chief Cornstalk	11,772		•	•			•		WVDNR
		59. East Lynn Lake	22,928		•	•		•		•	WVDNR
		60. Fork Creek	7,000		•	•			•		CCC
		61. Green Bottom	1,096		•	•		•			WVDNR/COE
		62. Hilbert	289		•	•					WVDNR
		63. Laurel Lake	12,856		•	•	•				WVDNR/FLG
		64. McClintic	3,655	•	•	•			•		WVDNR
		65. Mill Creek	1,470		•	•					WVDNR
		66. Morris Creek	9,874		•	•		•			TRUST
		67. Upper Mud River	1,425		•	•	•	•			LCC
		68. Buffalo Run	143		•	•		•			WVDNR
		69. Conway Run Lake	630		•	•	•		•		WVDNR
		70. Frozen Camp	2,587		•	•		•			WVDNR
		71. Hughes River	10,000	•	•	•					Heartwood
6	WVDNR (304) 420-4550 2311 Ohio Avenue Parkersburg, WV 26101	72. O'Brien Lake	217			•		•			WVDNR
		73. Ritchie Mines	2,300		•		•				WVDNR
		74. Rollins Lake	80			•		•			WVDNR
		75. Sand Hill	967		•	•					CNGTC
		76. Stumptown	1,675		•		•				WVDNR
		77. The Jug	2,848		•		•		•		WVDNR
		78. Turkey Run	27			•		•			WVDNR
		79. Woodrum	1,696		•	•		•			WVDNR

State and National Forests - Public Lands

	Forests	Acres	Class Q Access	Big Game	Small Game	Fishing		Boating	Camping		Ownership
						Lake	Stream		Tent	Trailer	
State	A. Cabwaylingo	8,123			•		•		•	•	WVDNR
	B. Calvin Price	9,482		•	•		•		•	•	WVDNR
	C. Camp Creek	5,300		•	•		•		•	•	WVDNR
	D. Coopers Rock	12,713		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	WVDNR
	E. Greenbrier	5,130		•	•				•	•	WVDNR
	F. Kanawha	9,302		•	•				•	•	WVDNR
	G. Kumbrow	9,474		•	•		•		•		WVDNR
	H. Panther	7,810		•		•	•		•	•	WVDNR
	I. Seneca	11,684		•	•		•	•	•		WVDNR
National	J. Beaver Dam WMA	37,674	•	•	•		•		•	•	USFS
	K. Blackwater WMA	58,978	•	•	•		•		•	•	USFS
	L. Cheat WMA	80,771		•	•		•		•	•	USFS
	M. Cove Creek WMA	428		•	•				•		USFS
	N. Cranberry WMA	158,147	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	USFS
	O. Little River WMA	124,483	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	USFS
	P. Neola WMA	104,750	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	USFS
	Q. Otter Creek WMA	68,782	•	•	•		•		•	•	USFS
	R. Potomac WMA	139,786	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	USFS
	S. Potts Creek WMA	18,526		•	•		•				USFS
	T. Rimel WMA	67,251	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	USFS
	U. Shenandoah WMA	67,919	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	USFS
	V. Tea Creek WMA	49,106	•	•	•		•		•	•	USFS
	W. Wardensville WMA	55,327		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	USFS

The Public Lands charts are provided as a guide to the use of public lands in West Virginia. The dots on these charts serve only as a means of designating the types of facilities, services or activities generally available. They are not intended to convey open or closed seasons or to supercede the rules, regulations or laws in effect on any public area. Please refer to posted rules and regulations on any area you visit.



Big Game Bulletin

Wildlife Resources

*West Virginia Division of
Natural Resources*

State Capitol Complex
Building 3, Room 812
Charleston, WV 25305
(304) 558-2771
Fax: (304) 558-3147

Bulletin 07-1



Your purchase of
hunting equipment
supports
Wildlife Restoration

It is the policy of the Division of Natural Resources to provide its facilities, services, programs, and employment opportunities to all persons without regard to sex, race, age, religion, national origin or ancestry, disability, or other protected group status.

8.5M 3/07